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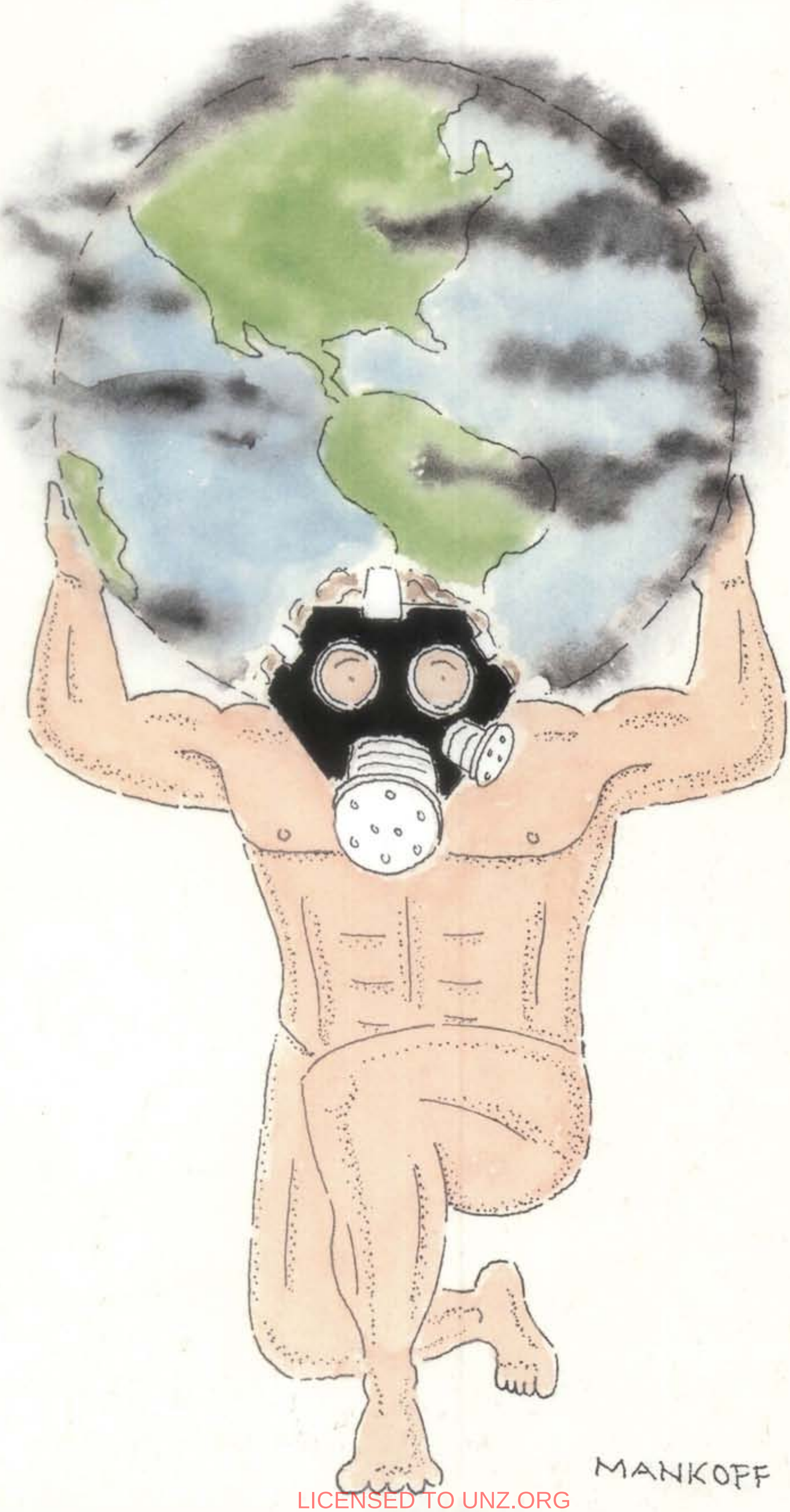

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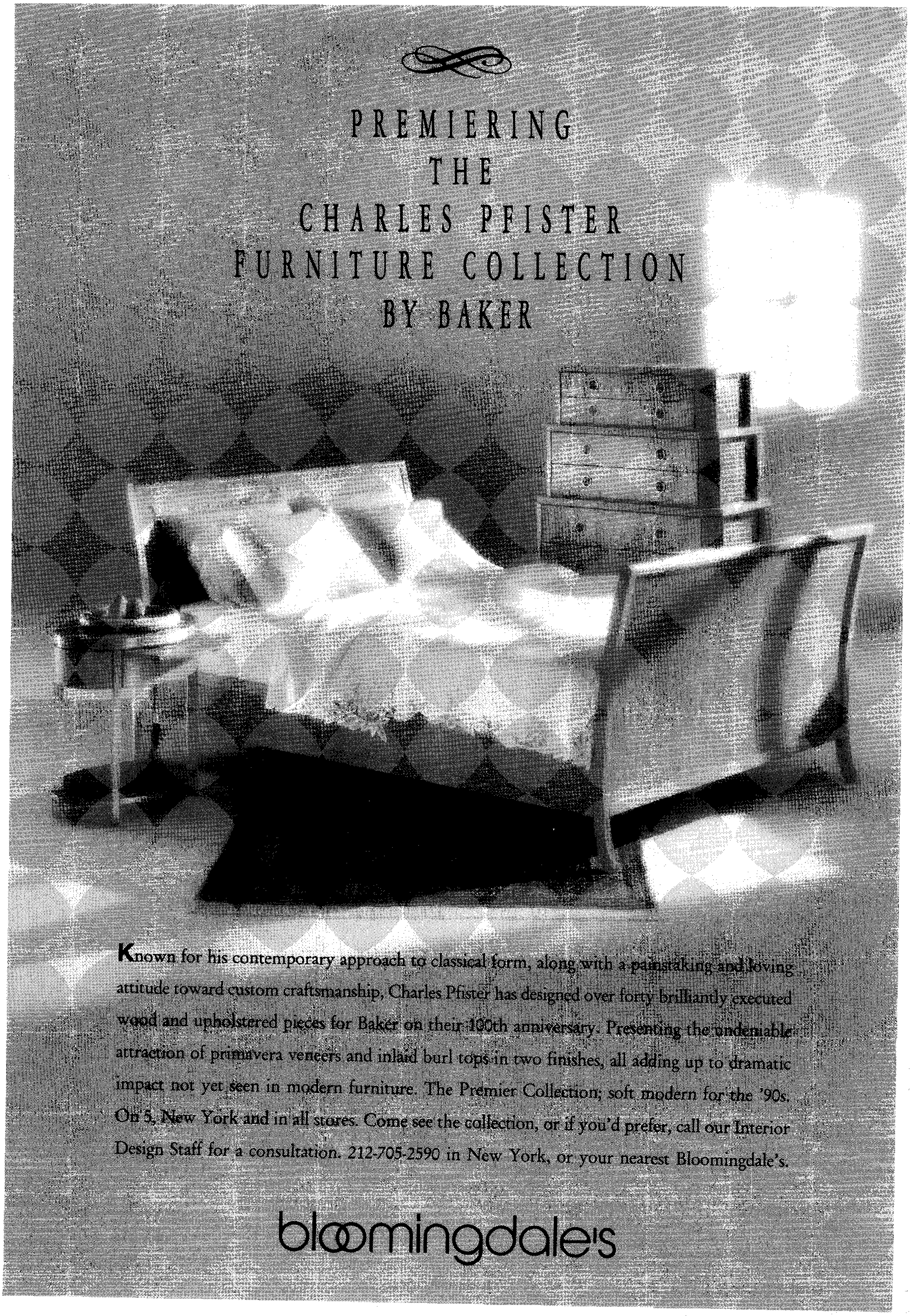

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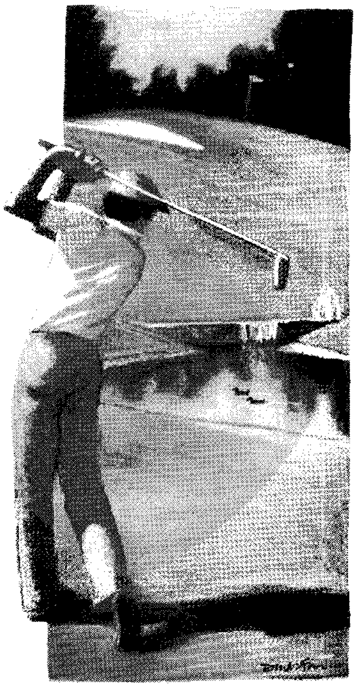

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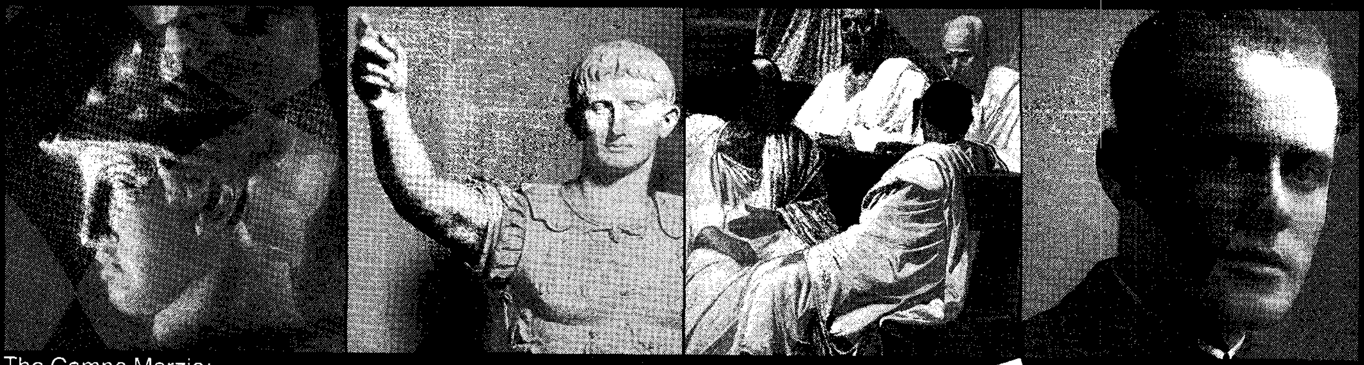

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

AUDIENCES like the ones you get at P.S. 122 always make us feel tremendously inadequate, managing as they do to appear at once slavishly hip and fiercely independent. It's a paradox we've always aspired to. We'd stand in front of the mirror for hours just changing clothes, and never get out of the house, if we ever once gave in to the overwhelming sense of not being on the cutting edge that tends to come over us anywhere below 14th Street (57th Street, really), so the other night, for Ain Gordon's "30 Stories" at P.S. 122, we donned a simple sweater and jeans and just about died of the heat.

"30 Stories"—which plays Thursdays through Sundays, until April 29—is probably the last word on indiscriminate mating. A sort of "Heidi Chronicles" for hipsters, it looks like performance art (it has pretensions), feels like poetry (it has rhythms and cadences), and is probably about as funny as it's possible to be about the avant-garde while still remaining part of it. Gordon's purpose is to poke fun at the sexual mores of the downtown-and-under-thirty set, represented by six friends who have all more or less had one another by the time two of them decide to settle down and "make it official." The idea of thirty stories arises because if you multiply six (the number of characters) by five (the number of other people with whom each of them has at one time been involved) that is what you end up with.

Gordon doesn't actually tell all the stories: some of them are allowed to flit by us with the merest reference, which is probably just as well. (The performance lasts about an hour and a half but seems much shorter.) In any case, what's being put on display isn't so much characters' relationships to each other as their relationship to relationships. But the general cadence of the evening produces a sense of closure, so that you end up feeling you've heard thirty stories, or at least one in its entirety: a story of people who behave as they do because they have no idea who they are themselves, and no real interest in each other.

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)

Accomplice—A comedy-thriller by Rupert Holmes, with Jason Alexander, Pamela Brull, Michael McKean, and Natalia Nogulich. In previews. (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211.)

A Change in the Heir—A musical by George H. Gorham and Dan Sticco, with Brooks Almy, Judy Blazer, and Jeffrey Herbst. In previews. (Edison, 240 W. 47th St. 302-2302.)

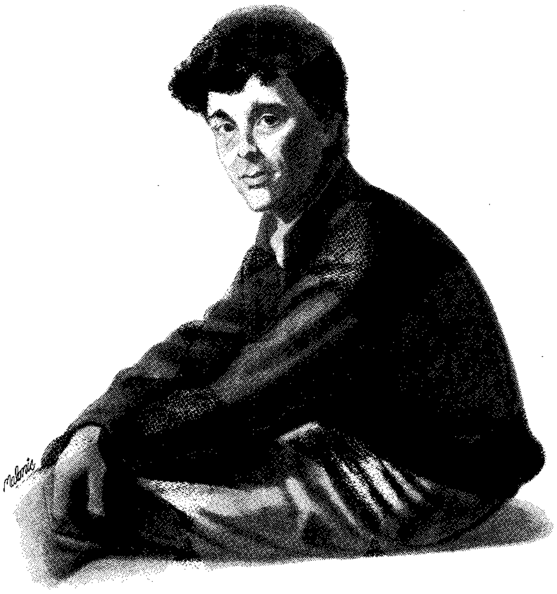
Further Mo'—A musical about the demise of black vaudeville, put together by Vernel Bagneris, the man behind 1979's "One Mo' Time." Previews begin April 20. (Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. 475-5120.)

Hamlet—Kevin Kline has directed and stars in the thirteenth production of Joseph Papp's Shakespeare Marathon. Dana Ivey, Brian Murray, Diane Venora, and Josef Sommer are also in the cast. In previews. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25			

Ice Cream—A play by Caryl Churchill, first seen last year at London's Royal Court Theatre. **Hot Fudge,** a new work by Ms. Churchill, is the curtain-raiser. Both with Jane Kaczmarek, Margaret Whitton, Robert Knepper, and James Rebhorn. In previews. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

Once on This Island—A musical by Lynn Ahrens (book and lyrics) and Stephen Flaherty (score). Directed and choreographed by Graciela Daniele. In previews. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)



"Prelude to a Kiss" playwright Craig Lucas

The Piano Lesson—Charles S. Dutton in a new play by August Wilson, which is directed by Lloyd Richards. Opens April 16 at 6. (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 582-4022.)

Spunk—George C. Wolfe's adaptation of three short stories by Zora Neale Hurston. Danitra Vance and Reggie Montgomery head the cast. Mr. Wolfe directed. Preview on April 17. Opens April 18 at 7:15. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

Tales of the Lost Formicans—Dan Butler, Lizbeth Mackay, and Rosemary Prinz are among the cast members of this play by Constance Congdon. Previews through April 22. Opens April 24 at 8. (Apple Corps Theatre, 336 W. 20th St. 627-3624.)

Truly Blessed: A Musical Celebration of Mahalia Jackson—A new musical written by and starring Queen Esther Marrow. Previews through April 21. Opens April 22 at 3. (Longacre, 220 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

Zoya's Apartment—Bronson Pinchot, Linda Thorson, and Robert LuPone in Mikhail Bulgakov's farce. Directed by Boris Morozov. Previews begin April 27. (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200.)

NEW THIS SEASON

Aspects of Love—The new Andrew Lloyd Webber musical, imported from London. Directed by Trevor Nunn, the show features Ann Crumb, Kathleen Rowe McAllen, Michael Ball, and Kevin Colson. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

Away Alone—No one could accuse Janet Noble's sweet, feckless comedy about young Irish immigrants in the Bronx of being overly sophisticated. The play is innocent, sentimental, and old-fashioned—a little like the characters it portrays—but the feeling it creates in the audience becomes infectious, a little like the laughter it inspires. (Irish Arts Center, 553 W. 51st St. 757-3318.)

Bad Habits—A revival of two 1973 one-acts by Terrence McNally. Nathan Lane, Toni DiBuono, and Allison Janney are in the cast. Directed by Paul Benedict. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907. Closes April 22.)

The Balcony—A revival of Jean Genet's 1960 play. (Hudson Guild, 441 W. 26th St. 760-9810.)

By and for Havel—A pair of one-acters in revival. "By"—**Audience**—is based on an episode that occurred when Václav Havel had a menial job in a brewery; "for"—**Catastrophe**—is Samuel Beckett's poetic tribute to Havel when he was in prison. Together, they make an evening that is both comic and stirring. With Kevin O'Connor and Lou Brockway. (Reviewed in our issue of 3/19/90.) (John Houseman Studio Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.)

Carbondale Dreams—Steven Sater's trilogy about a family of Ugly-American Jews in the Midwest began life as a pair of one-acts entitled "Beth" and "Bradley." (A third, "Arnold," has since been added.) "Beth" is so full of Jewish self-loathing and hostility toward one's parents (the work reeks of autobiography) as to be unendurable. Perhaps Sater needs to be reminded that the best revenge is living well, not writing poorly. (Kaufman, 534 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.)

Cat on a Hot Tin Roof—As Maggie the Cat, Kathleen Turner seems in desperate straits in this limp and hapless revival of Tennessee Williams' most playable family melodrama. (4/2/90) (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220.)

The Circle—Rex Harrison, Glynis Johns, Stewart Granger, and an able supporting company have raised Somerset Maugham to the heights of Sheridan and Congreve. The play is about an elderly couple who pay a visit to the wife's middle-aged son, whom she deserted thirty years before. Brian Murray directed the fine production. (12/4/89) (Ambassador, 215 W. 49th St. 239-6200.)

City of Angels—Larry Gelbart, dramatist; Cy Coleman, composer; Billy Byers, arranger; James Naughton and Gregg Edelman, leading men; and Michael Blakemore, director, are all in top form in this sharp, jokey musical satire about Hollywood in the forties. The plot concerns the making of a private-eye movie (and the unmaking of its author). The spectacular settings and costumes were designed by Robin Wagner and Florence Klotz and lighted by Paul Gallo. (12/25/89) (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 246-0102.)

Closer Than Ever—This charmer amounts to an anthology of songs and sketches by Richard Maltby, Jr. (words), and David Shire (music), as sung and performed by Brent Barrett, Sally Mayers, Richard Muenz, and Lynne Wintersteller. They are a gifted quartet, and lucky to have such attractive, humorous, and tender songs to sing and words to speak. The fact that there is no amplification is an extra boon. (11/13/89) (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020.)

The Crucible—A revival of Arthur Miller's 1953 drama, with Justine Bateman, Harriet Harris, and Randle Mell. Directed by Gerald Freedman. (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883.)

Der Ring Gott Farblonjet—The Ridiculous Theatrical Company in a revival of Charles Ludlam's 1977 play. Directed by Everett Quinton. (Charles Ludlam Theatre, One Sheridan Square. 691-2271.)

A Few Good Men—"Mister Roberts" meets "The Mary Tyler Moore Show." Aaron Sorkin's military-courtroom drama treats issues such as justice, honor, loyalty, and morality with the slick, facile smugness of a half-hour comedy series, but the performances, by an ace cast under Don Scardino's direction, are wonderful. (11/27/89) (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Grand Hotel—The dazzling imagination of Tommy Tune's direction and choreography and the dazzling scenery by Tony Walton almost make up for the inner vacancy of this

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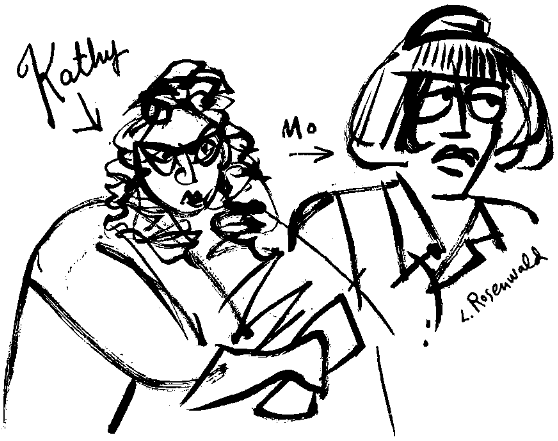


Kathy Najimy and Mo Gaffney in "The Kathy and Mo Show"

show (except for a glorious, eccentric dance by Michael Jeter), but not quite. The story and characters are skimpy and the music is undistinguished. Nevertheless, there isn't a boring moment. (11/27/89) (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-0102.)

The Grapes of Wrath—This stage adaptation (by Frank Galati, who also directed) is the most truly adult version of Steinbeck's novel to date. It appeals to the mind rather than to the emotions; all the same, there's a cumulative effect. Don't go expecting to see John Ford or "Balm in Gilead," but expect to leave feeling as if you had. With Lois Smith and Gary Sinise. (4/2/90) (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

Gypsy—This revival of the great Sondheim-Styne-Laurents-Robbins musical (directed by Arthur Laurents himself) is so delightful—and the cast (led by Tyne Daly, Crista Moore, and Jonathan Hadary) so engaging—that we think anyone would be happier for having seen it. One suggestion: don't applaud when Mama Rose comes down the aisle (you'll drown out the first number). Trust Broadway; you'll have ample time to welcome Miss Daly when she mounts the steps and delivers her first onstage line. (12/4/89) (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 246-0102.)

I Am a Winner!—A comedy by Fred Valle that takes place in Spanish Harlem. Three performances a week are in English, four are in Spanish. (Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. 354-1293. Closes April 22.)

Jean Cocteau Repertory—Presenting two works in rotating repertory: **THE PRINCE OF HOMBERG,** by Heinrich von Kleist, in a translation by Douglas Langworthy; and Eric Bentley's version of Brecht's **A MAN'S A MAN.** (Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery, at Bond St. 677-0060.)

Lettice & Lovage—The marvellous Maggie Smith plays Lettice Douffet, a freewheeling guide to England's stately homes, and the elegant Margaret Tyzack plays a reprimanding envoy sent by Lettice's employers in Peter Shaffer's merry comedy about an unlikely friendship and other matters. Paxton Whitehead and Bette Henritze are effective in supporting roles. Michael Blakemore was the director. (4/9/90) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)

Mama, I Want to Sing/Part II—A new musical by Vy Higginsen, Ken Wydro, and Wesley Naylor. The show plays Fridays at 8, Saturdays at 2 and 8, and Sundays at 3. The original **MAMA, I WANT TO SING** plays Saturdays at 5. (Heckscher, Fifth Ave. at 104th St. 534-2804.)

Meet Me in St. Louis—If you like the old M-G-M musical, you probably won't like this stage version, which combines the earnest, wholesome values of the movie with an aesthetic of surpassing vulgarity. In any case, why see the show when you can rent the movie? (11/20/89) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 246-0102.)

A Mom's Life—A one-woman play written and performed by Kathryn Grody, and directed by Timothy Near. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Closes April 22.)

Mountain—Len Cariou is Justice William O. Douglas, and Heather Summerhayes and John C. Vennema play multiple roles as the people he encountered every step of the way, from his boyhood, in the State of Washington, through his thirty-six-year term on the Supreme Court. Though perhaps a bit over-reverent, the play, by Douglas Scott, is as interesting as the history it portrays. The acting is fine; Mr. Vennema's thumbnail Nixon is especially striking. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782.)

Negro Ensemble Company—The fourth production of the season is **LIFETIMES ON THE STREETS,** which was written by Gus Edwards. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 246-8545. Closes April 22.)

Prelude to a Kiss—Craig Lucas's entertaining romantic comedy slips into fantasy when an old man kisses a bride at her wedding. Barnard Hughes is the old man, Mary-Louise Parker is the bride, and Timothy Hutton is the groom. The play was directed by Norman René. (3/26/90) (Circle Repertory Company, 99 Seventh Ave. S. 924-7100. Through April 19. The show will move on April 24 to Broadway's Helen Hayes Theatre, 240 W. 44th St., 944-9450.)

Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll—All manner of hypocrites, fakes, liars, and other ethical discards are subjected to Eric Bogosian's incomparable mimicry and wit. The evening is anything but depressing. (2/26/90) (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477.) . . . **NOTE:** The evening performance on April 22 will be a benefit for the AIDS Resource Center. For tickets, call 447-7549.

Some Americans Abroad—Yank Anglophilia and self-hatred among a group of academics on their department's annual theatre tour of England. The play, by Richard Nelson, would be worth seeing if only for the quality and style of the performances—particularly from Colin Stinton and Henderson Forsythe. You could do a lot worse than this well-observed and amusing comedy of manners. (So, as the record shows, could the playwright.) (2/26/90) (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Moves upstairs on April 25 to the Vivian Beaumont. The phone number for tickets is the same.)

The Sound of Music—As Rodgers and Hammerstein's would-be postulant Maria, Debby Boone combines a talent for yodelling with an apparent inability to act or to sustain a note. This City Opera revival is so inert that it would probably bore a child. Still, Werner Klemperer (in the Kurt Kasznar role) is nice to have around. (3/26/90) (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Closes April 22.)

Starting Monday—A play by Anne Commire. (WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523. Closes April 22.)

Tru—Robert Morse gives a deeply thought-out, accomplished performance as Truman Capote—by turns funny, bitchy, ironic, and rueful—at the end of his life and his tether. The play was written and directed by Jay Presson Allen. (1/1/90) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

York Theatre Company—Presenting a revival of **THE GOLDEN APPLE,** the 1954 musical by John Latouche (score) and Jerome Moross (lyrics). (2 E. 90th St. 534-5366. Closes April 22.)

LONG RUNS

BLACK AND BLUE: An evening of classic blues and jazz, conceived, designed, and directed by Claudio Segovia and Héctor Orezzoli, who created "Tango Argentino" in a similarly commemorative but far less visually opulent style. Musicians of renown have been assembled, and while Ruth Brown, Linda Hopkins, and Carrie Smith sing, Bunny Briggs, Jimmy Slyde, and a troupe of hoofers young and old give the tap-dance subculture a workout. (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 246-0102.) . . . **CATS:** Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to John Napier's sets and costumes. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Closes April 28.) . . . **DRIVING MISS DAISY:** Frances Sternhagen and Arthur French star in Alfred Uhry's play, which tells of the growing attachment of a cranky old woman in Atlanta to her black chauffeur. Directed by Ron Lagomarsino. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** The longest-running long run turns thirty this year. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.) . . . **FORBIDDEN BROADWAY 1990:** A source of continual merriment, this revue is a cluster of parodies of shows along the Great White Way. Gerard Alessandrini conceived and directed it, and wrote the witty, barbed lyrics. (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.) . . . **THE HEIDI CHRONICLES:** Wendy Wasserstein's plays looks at first glance like standard baby-boom playwriting fare, but some alchemical combination of graceful-mindedness and good writing enables her to capture, lampoon, and transcend her generation all at the same time. With Brooke Adams. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.) . . . **JEROME ROBBINS' BROADWAY:** A collection of high spots from "On the Town," "Billion Dollar Baby," "High Button Shoes," "The King and I," "Peter Pan," "West Side Story," "Gypsy," "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum," and "Fiddler on the Roof," all of which were choreographed or directed, or both, by Jerome Robbins. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.) . . . **THE KATHY AND MO SHOW: PARALLEL LIVES:** Comedy skits and vignettes written and performed by Kathy Najimy and Mo Gaffney. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Closes April 29.) . . . **LEND ME A TENOR:** The setting of this farce by Ken Ludwig is a hotel suite in Cleveland in 1934, where a famous tenor who is booked to sing "Otello" takes an overdose of barbiturates. A substitute must be found. Under Jerry Zaks' direction, all the surprises up the dramatist's sleeve are brought to comic life. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Closes April 22.) . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** The stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hersey's lighting. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200.) . . . **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.) . . . **OTHER PEOPLE'S MONEY:** Jerry Sterner's comedy about a New York corporate raider's attempt to take over a decorous New England business maintains its suspense from beginning to end. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.) . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** The much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets, everything about the show is negligible. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

DANCE

FOR some five decades, "Of Bright & Blue Birds & the Gala Sun" has been the title of a poem by Wallace Stevens. This year, it also became the title of a new work by Paul Taylor. At fifteen lines, the poem is one of Stevens' most condensed; its theme is the joy of being alive. At two acts plus intermission, the dance is one of Taylor's longest; its themes include moral darkness and spiritual extremity, as well as grace, vision, and other manifestations of angelic order. The poetic well Taylor has been drawing from also goes deeper than a single poet's œuvre. When we recently attended a "Birds" rehearsal at the Taylor studio, on lower Broadway, the choreographer asked the dancers present to vote on an epigraph for the dance. The choices he gave them were Revelation, 9:1, about a bottomless pit and a falling star, and William Blake's "Ah! Sun-Flower," about a trip in the opposite direction. By a show of hands, it was the Pit 0, the Sunflower 18, nearly the number of dancers in the cast. In every respect, "Birds" is a sizable effort. How it will register from the stage—with its Blakean dé-

If you were a dinosaur, what would you think of a thing called Earth Day, 70 million years after your swan

song? Well, reptiles aren't as a group known for a sense of conscience. And these dinosaurs occurred in the environment with all the grace of a train wreck. And they almost certainly couldn't "think."

However. In their 100 million years a-stomp on our planet, it reached nothing like the pickle it's in today. A pickle we *Homo sapiens* have produced in just 50,000 years' time.

Which means that, unlike them, we happen to need this thing called Earth Day. About which, these words.

It's in April, and on it, people concerned about what we're doing to our planet have been doing things about it, for 20 years now. Cleaning up messes. Planting trees. Doing what they can to make people think about how fragile the place is, and how easily our technologies can ruin it.

We'd like to suggest that you get involved in this year's Anniversary Earth Day, April 22, the most important yet. We think it will help. Through our many stores across the country, we at The Nature Company are going to be doing things ourselves—and invite you to join us. But we'd also like to take a moment to salute dinosaurs—whom nothing can save.

Did you know they were warm-blooded? That tiny, one-pound descendants grew feathers probably to keep themselves warm? And that they probably engendered birds?

A lot can happen in 70 million years.

And incidentally, recent work shows that—at least for reptiles of their size—many dinosaurs weren't dumb at all. Some had brains as much as 1 ½ times the size you'd expect. Which may be significant, if brain size is.

We don't really know, but we think it's a good thing to think about.

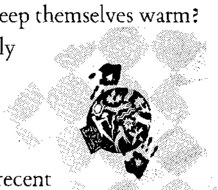
A worthy topic as Earth Day approaches. Accordingly, at The Nature Company, we offer numerous volumes on dinosaurs, to help you consider it. And a Naturalist's Hotline to help with questions about natural history, and, as it happens, to suggest some things to do for Earth Day. 1-800-848-3583, 9-5 Pacific time weekdays, to call the Naturalist's Hotline.

What we try above all to provide at The Nature Company—and have for 17 years—are tools to help celebrate the life of our planet.

Then and now. Simple as that. Thank you.

THE ONLY ONES LEFT. *Today, there aren't many ways to appreciate the majesty of dinosaurs. Inflatables like this 54" Tyrannosaurus rex will help. 1-800-227-1114* *$16.95*

THE CRUX OF IT. *Growing a tree helps fight global warming, process carbon dioxide, and make something beautiful. Black hills spruce. 1-800-227-1114* *$16.00*



THIS TOO WILL HELP. *A portion of the sales of our Earth Day t-shirt will go to The Nature Conservancy. 1-800-227-1114. $15.95*

A FEW OF THE THINGS YOU CAN DO WITH US FOR EARTH DAY.

NEW YORK CITY. Help clean up Lookout Hill in Prospect Park, Brooklyn.

PENTAGON CITY, VA. Tree planting and hands-on activities for children 10 and under.

MINNEAPOLIS. Mississippi riverfront cleanup in conjunction with Minneapolis Park Board.

SEATTLE AND PORTLAND. We're donating and organizing the planting of 1,000 trees—and could use help.

LA JOLLA, CA. Hike with a naturalist, who will teach us to identify animals by their tracks. It'll be fun.

SAN FRANCISCO. Join us in working with Ocean Alliance to clean up the world's largest urban beach.

EACH OF OUR 41 STORES. Activities you can learn about by calling our Naturalist's Hotline. 1-800-848-3583.

THE NATURE COMPANY

SAN FRANCISCO
SEATTLE

LOS ANGELES
SAN DIEGO

MINNEAPOLIS
ST. LOUIS

NEW YORK
NEW JERSEY

BOSTON
PORTLAND

WASHINGTON D.C.
BALTIMORE

THE NATURE COMPANY DEPT NY40 P.O. BOX 2310 BERKELEY, CA 94702 *(Add $2 for shipping plus tax where applicable)* cor and costumes by Santo Loquasto, and with Donald York's commissioned score played live—is anybody's guess. The movement in the studio was hellzapoppin'.

Taylor fans will have seen part of "Birds" before. The center section—a feverish, whirling ceremony that seems bent on eradicating the barest idea of Euclidean geometry in movement—used to be performed only under the title "Syzygy." Mr. Taylor said that after two sets of costumes and lighting designs the piece still didn't sit right with him, so, last year, he asked Mr. York to expand the "Syzygy" score. Then, to give the older choreography a framework, Mr. Taylor set about to discover two more contrasting movement styles, for sections to be placed on either side of "Syzygy." "The story line kind of grew out of that," he said. "And the story is the simplest I can imagine: being at home, leaving, going back home, or, perhaps, appreciating home again through different eyes. For the life of me, though, I couldn't see everybody walking off into the sunset at the end. There had to be a little twist of lemon; otherwise the cycle couldn't start over. Nothing vicious, but something subtly vague, open, for the audience to do some work."

NEW YORK CITY BALLET—Opening performances of a nine-week season, which will run through July 1. April 24 at 8: "La Source," "Prodigal Son," and "Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 2." . . . ¶ April 25 at 8: "Allegro Brillante," "Prodigal Son," and "Symphony in C." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

PAUL TAYLOR DANCE COMPANY—Opening performances of a four-week engagement that will run through May 13. April 17 at 7: "Arden Court," "Images," "Roses," and a retrospective film. . . . ¶ April 18 at 8: "Brandenburgs," "Snow White," "The Sorcerer's Sofa" (New York première), and "Danbury Mix." . . . ¶ April 19 at 8: "Roses," "Runes," and "Esplanade." . . . ¶ April 20 at 8: "Brandenburgs," "Snow White," "The Sorcerer's Sofa," and "Danbury Mix." . . . ¶ April 21 at 8: "Arden Court" and "Speaking in Tongues." . . . ¶ April 22 at 3: "Brandenburgs," "Snow White," "The Sorcerer's Sofa," and "Danbury Mix." . . . ¶ April 22 at 7:30: "Roses," "Runes," and "Esplanade." . . . ¶ April 24 at 8: "Arden Court" and "Speaking in Tongues." . . . ¶ April 25 at 8: "Of Bright & Blue Birds & the Gala Sun" (première). (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907.)

"OBA OBA '90"—Final performances of a Brazilian music-and-dance revue. (Marquis Theatre, Broadway at 45th St. 246-0102. Tuesday through Saturday at 8, and Sunday at 7. Matinées Saturday at 2 and Sunday at 3. Through April 22.)

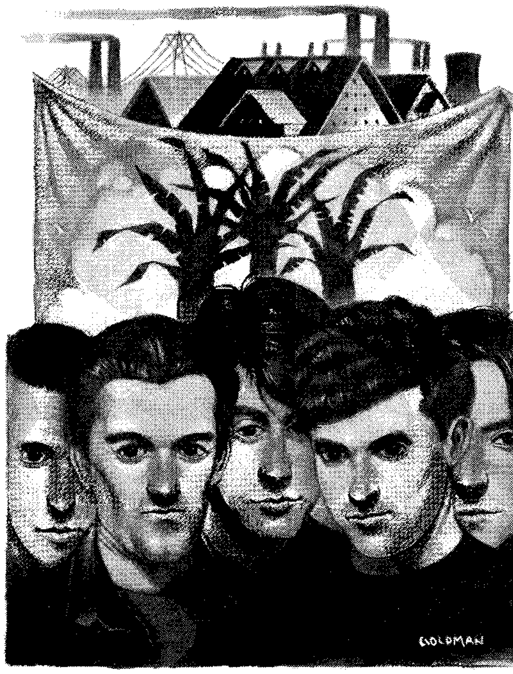
ELISE MONTE DANCE COMPANY—A one-week engagement. April 17 at 7:30, April 20-21 at 8, and April 22 at 7:30: "Dextra Dei" (New York première), "White Dragon," "Pigs and Fishes," and "Audentity." . . . ¶ April 18 and April 19 at 8, and April 22 at 2: "Split Personality" (New York première), "Audentity," "Treading," and "VII for VIII." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800.)

"BROKEN HEARTS"—A piece for five dancers by Merián Soto (choreography) and Pepón Osorio (sets), which incorporates film and spoken text. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. April 18-21 at 8 and April 22 at 3.)

LUCINDA CHILDS AND DAVID GORDON—A benefit. Members of Ms. Childs' company will present "Pastime," "Carnation," and "Radial Courses." The David Gordon/Pick Up Company will perform the New York premières of "Weather" and "Birds in the Trees and the Birthday of Congress." (Judson Memorial Church, 55 Washington Sq. S. April 19-21 at 8. For reservations, call 777-0033.)

COMPANY APPELS—Presenting "A French Revolution" and other works. (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. April 20 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

BATTERY DANCE COMPANY—In "Light from Dead Stars" and other works. With twenty guest dancers from Radford University. (Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. 355-6160. April 20-21 at 8 and April 22 at 7.)



The Beautiful South at the Ritz

NIGHT LIFE

A FEW weeks ago, during Wendy MaHarry's first New York City appearance, her sound monitors went on the blink. Disconcerted, the pop singer-pianist resorted to a simple, ancient Plan B: she looked at her mother. Like everybody else at the Bitter End that night—and most of the people who've heard the singer's very thoughtful début record, "Wendy MaHarry"—her mother thought she was doing just fine. MaHarry's music calls to mind that of Suzanne Vega and Rickie Lee Jones, both because it is hushed and intensely private and because it occasionally tilts toward melodrama. Her piano playing is loaded with classical inflections—at the Bitter End, she played one melody so reminiscent of Pachelbel's Canon that we could have sworn we were dining out at the Palm Court—and her voice is so fragile and breathy that some of her songs sound like nothing so much as lullabies, albeit rather tense and spooky ones.

After playing a few numbers alone at the piano, MaHarry, a twenty-six-year-old who was trained as a painter and who still seems a little nervous onstage, was joined by a fiddler, a bassist, and a percussionist. In all, it was a slightly erratic performance, but MaHarry seemed fresh and genuine, and her first single, "All That I've Got," had a nice reception. After the show, she was crowded by well-wishers, and we were among them.

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

ALGONQUIN HOTEL, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—**TOVAH FELDSHUH,** whose trophy case is well stocked thanks to her Broadway stint as Yentl and her performance in the TV series "Holocaust," will be making her cabaret début in the recently revamped Oak Room this week. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine and eleven. Dining.

BALLROOM, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A sleek cabaret on the edge of Chelsea, near the flower and fur markets. **CHARLES PIERCE,** the Hollywood-diva impersonator who can walk like Bette, talk like Bette, and "hate Joan Crawford more than anyone," is in residence through April 21. Aside from Ms. Davis, look for Mae West, Tallulah Bankhead, and an assortment of "turban ladies." Fasten your garter belts, as Mr. Pierce likes to say. A musical revue called "Hollywood Opera" begins on April 24. Shows Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine; Fridays and Saturdays at nine and eleven.

BIRDLAND, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—The jazz personnel turns over nearly every night at this airy, loftlike restaurant-bar, in the gray zone between Zabar's and Columbia. Some may cry gentrification at the sight of the pastel walls, the potted greenery, and the upscale bar crowd, but the floor-to-ceiling windows make for some fine Broadway-viewing. The alto saxophonist and composer **BOBBY WATSON** takes charge April 19-21. Music from nine Sundays through Thursdays and from nine-thirty Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A glitzy, color-coördinated jazz house, designed for maximum seating efficiency, where blue-suspendered waitresses sweep by your table bearing shrimp cocktails, champagne, and other trappings of the good life. After the show, out-of-towners flock to the upstairs souvenir shop, where, at last check, Blue Note golf balls were still available. Guitarist **JIM HALL** and bassist **RON CARTER** are at work here through April 22. There was a time when vibraphonist **GARY BURTON** kept his outfits out of night clubs—"I'm a daytime person, and I don't like late hours," he told one reporter—but as of April 24 he can be found here with a "reunion" group. Among the musicians will be **PAT METHENY** (whom Burton discovered when the guitarist was still a teenager tooling around Missouri), **MITCH FORMAN, PETER ERSKINE,** and **MARC JOHNSON.** Music comes on around nine. Dining.

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—A big, pleasant room where they pack them in until someone says uncle. The **FEELIES,** who perform April 19-21, are a perennial cult favorite. Their followers love them for their indifference to commercial success, their lack of rock posturing (they're the band that made rock safe for nerds), and, of course, their music: the layered, hypnotic guitar strumming, the restrained vocals, the peculiar droning lyricism. **LAURA NYRO,** the bluesy, bohemian singer-songwriter who flourished in the late sixties and early seventies, claims April 22. April 23 belongs to **DEL AMITRI,** a pop-rock band whose recent major-label début is plaintive and catchy and evokes the heartland sound of, say, John Cougar Mellancamp. **RICHARD BARONE** steps in on April 25. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Burgers, fries, and other things to make your heart beat faster.

BRADLEY'S, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A neighborhood bar where, if your neighbors coöperate, you can hear the beautiful, singular sound of musicians thinking. Pianist **BILL MAYS** and bassist **RAY DRUMMOND** hold forth April 17-21; trumpeter and flugelhornist **DANNY MOORE** leads a quartet April 22; and a trio consisting of **RALPH MOORE, JOHN HICKS,** and **PETER WASHINGTON** starts up on April 23. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

CARLYLE HOTEL, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The pastel uptown spa known as the Café Carlyle is home to **DIXIE CARTER,** a TV actress and songbird who performs music by a rather diverse cast of songwriters, including Cole Porter and Bob Dylan. Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-thirty and eleven-

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

thirty. . . . ¶ Across the hall, the patron saint of Bemelmans Bar, **BARBARA CARROLL,** presides at the piano from nine-forty-five Tuesdays through Saturdays.

Condon's, 117 E. 15th St. (254-0960)—A snug, candlelit catacomb just east of Union Square. The **HARPER BROTHERS,** a young, hard-swinging aggregate knee-deep in fifties and sixties jazz, start up on April 24. Music after ten.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—If submarines had jazz clubs, they might look like this basement haunt, which is reached by passing through a tight corridor where you half expect to bump into Admiral Nimitz. This is not the place for those with a fear of intimacy: at the front tables you can go eye to eye with your favorite performers, and no matter where you're seated there's not much room to practice your T'ai Chi. A quintet belonging to **TOM HARRELL** is in residence through April 22; **HANK JONES,** who is Thad and Elvin's older brother and who has been playing Art Tatum-style piano since he first came to New York, in 1943, heads a trio here as of April 24. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL,** the Thomas Edison of reverb, leads a trio. Music from eight. Dining.

Fortune Garden Pavilion, 209 E. 49th St. (753-0101)—Chinese food served in a plush greenhouse setting. Through the glass roof, which supports a jungle of potted greenery, you can admire the fruits of the midtown real-estate boom and, when available, the moon. A Steinway grand sits in the middle of the room, making things tricky for the waiters but improving the over-all quality of life. April 17-22, the bench is occupied by the fiery, Czechoslovakian-born pianist **ADAM MAKOWICZ.** With him will be cornettist **WARREN VACHÉ.** Pianist **CAROL BRITTO** and bassist **MAJOR HOLLEY** begin a week-long engagement on April 24. Music from eight Mondays through Saturdays, and from seven on Sundays.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25			

Knitting Factory, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—A second-floor music-and-performance space, where people come to ponder the meaning of harmolodics and the post-ness of postmodernism. The room is run by two amiable young guys from Wisconsin, whose views on such things as cover charges are enlightened. The **ORDINAIRES,** a category-bending mini big band that features electric violins, wailing guitars, and some natty thrift-shop fashions, are in action on April 20. Gretchen Langheld performs on April 17, and the **NED ROTHENBERG** Double Band claims April 18. Music after nine.

Lone Star Roadhouse, 240 W. 52nd St. (245-2950)—A cheery, climate-controlled restaurant and bar featuring a load of snazzy Gibson guitars, some Washington Square-style portraits of folks like Bo Diddley and Dr. John, and funky French fry–potato chip hybrids. **JOE ELY,** a pop-rock-country singer and songwriter from Lubbock, Texas, Buddy Holly's home town, writes gritty, humorous songs about love, loss, and the road, occasionally throwing in such curiosities as "My Baby Thinks She's French." He goes to work on April 19. **MINK DEVILLE,** the rock and R. & B. group led by the Alphabet City-bred crooner Willy Deville, performs on April 20. April 21 belongs to **ROOMFUL OF BLUES,** and April 23 to Blues Traveler. Music after nine. Dining.

Michael's Pub, 221 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—A mid-Manhattan pub for well-heeled gents and high-heeled ladies. **SID CAESAR & IMOGENE COCA** begin an engagement on April 17, entitled "Together Again," that marks the fortieth anniversary of the première of Caesar's TV series "Your Show of Shows" and is also the pair's New York stage début. The material here, like that from Mr. Caesar's recent successful run on Broadway, will rely heavily on old favorites from the TV years, and with Ms. Coca, Mr. Caesar's former partner, on board, the act can be expected to hit new highs. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays. Dining. Closed Sundays.

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—Lyricist **SHELDON HARNICK,** who wrote, among other things, "Fiorello," "She Loves Me," and "Fiddler on the Roof," is currently in residence with an all-my-best revue. Shows from nine. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

Ritz, 254 W. 54th St. (541-8900)—A rock club where the customer is not always right. April 20 belongs to the **SMITHEREENS,** whose third and latest album, "11," offers a solid lineup of infectious, Beatles-tinged power-pop. With up-front guitars, simple song structures, and melodies that seem to rise from some collective unconscious, the Smithereens are pop classicists. With "11" the band is three for three, not a statistic to be taken lightly. **THE BEAUTIFUL SOUTH,** which will perform April 21, is led by former Housemartins Paul Heaton and Dave Hemingway. The group's recently released début album is a pleasant, post-Smiths excursion marked by airy pop that skips along the surface and lyrics that have a surprising left-wing bite. "With this band we'd like to give our support to the smaller causes," Heaton said not long ago, "but basically we feel that not very much can be done until you murder the ruling classes." Also: **OINGO BOINGO** appearing on April 25. Shows begin at nine Sundays through Thursdays, and at eleven Fridays and Saturdays.

Sounds of Brazil, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—This former luncheonette has a tropical motif—straw huts, bamboo, a fake palm tree, a mosaic of gourds—and perhaps the city's most international booking policy: Brazil, Africa, and the Caribbean are just a few of the places explored. The **WAILERS,** as in the late Bob Marley, check in April 25-26. Music from nine Tuesdays through Thursdays, and from ten Fridays and Saturdays. Dining. Closed Sundays.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—An itinerary stop for the international jazz groupies who, on any given night, can be seen roaming the streets of the Village. Up front, there's a glass-enclosed sidewalk café; in back is a larger room, with a pressed-tin ceiling, red brick, and more pinewood than a ski lodge. **ABDULLAH IBRAHIM & EKAYA** continue through April 22. Mr. Ibrahim, a pianist, flutist, and saxophonist, favors polyphonic melody lines and bluesy, soulful numbers that weave together Monk, Ellington, gospel, and the sounds of his native South Africa. He also has the good sense to allow his excellent accompanists plenty of room to maneuver. The electrified big band of the late Gil Evans, now under the direction of his son, trumpeter Miles Evans, is in action on Mondays. Tee-off time is around ten. Dining.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—This windowless, pie-shaped basement has an illustrious history that embraces everyone from Judy Holliday to Lenny Bruce, from Pete Seeger and Leadbelly to Miles Davis and Sonny Rollins. The décor is homey and a little faded, like an attic full of memorabilia, but the music is anything but stale. Saxophonist **JOHNNY GRIFFIN,** who has been known to improvise at a breakneck clip, leads a quartet here through April 22; bebop saxophonist **JACKIE MC CLEAN** starts up with his own quartet on April 24. Mondays are reserved for the late Mel Lewis's big band. Music after ten.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A rarity among jazz clubs: somewhere you'd go to eat even if there were no music. The food is Italian, the atmosphere is pastels and soft lights, and the musicians, who set up in a room between the bar and the dining room, are first-rate. The piano-bass teams: **JANE JARVIS** and **MILT HINTON** through April 21; **KIRK LIGHTSEY** and **CECIL MC BEE** beginning April 23. Music from eight weeknights and Sundays from seven.

SIGN OF THE TIMES

The National Debt Clock has found a new home. Last year, Seymour Durst, a real-estate developer, installed the ten-by-twenty-five-foot, olive-drab digital conscience on one of his buildings, at the corner of Sixth Avenue and 42nd Street, high above Jewelry by Kim, the Ami Grocery Store, and a hit-and-run pizza-and-hot-dog joint. The clock calculates the national debt and divides out "YOUR FAMILY SHARE." The tallying goes so fast—during some weeks the debt figure increases by fourteen thousand dollars per second—that the numbers on the far right blur, like cards in a game of monte.

Two weeks ago, Mr. Durst had the clock carted down the block in the direction of Times Square, to grace another of his properties. The buildings at the former site are slated to be demolished; now they're just empty shells plastered with movie posters advertising "The First Power," "Cry-Baby," and "Opportunity Knocks," titles that collectively form a kind of tattered description of the American economy over the past decade. Maybe the move (to a billboard rack hovering over the 42nd Street Deli and a check-cashing concern) will do the debt good—slow it down and make it fathomable. Whatever the future pace, it felt fine to see the clock before it was electronically hooked up again: the spaces where figures usually race and flash were serenely static and dark, as if someone had put a patch on the evil eye and it had started to rest.

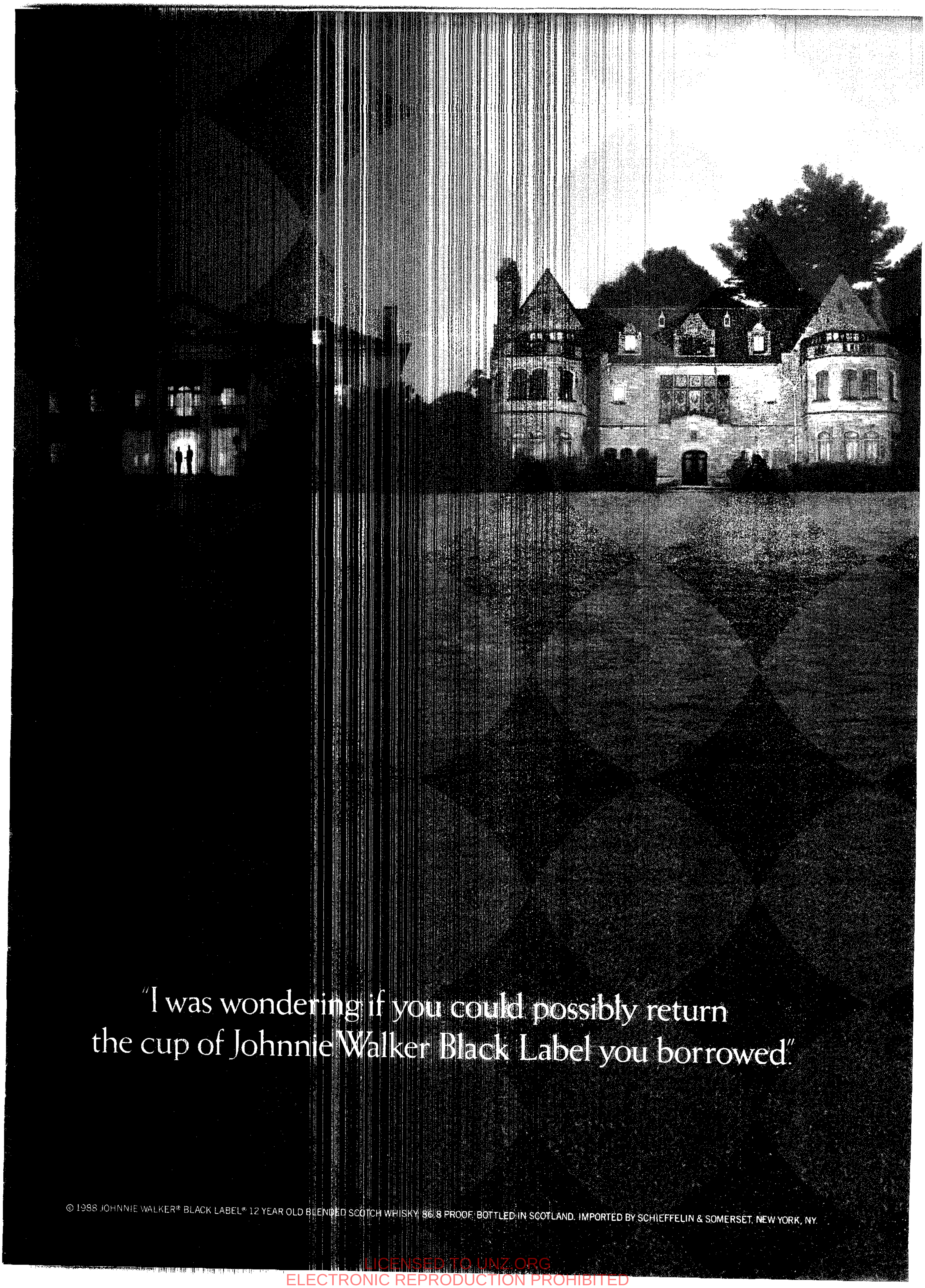
EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

BY Day Four of New York's recent Fashion Week, a SWAT team couldn't have matched the humorlessness of two back-row members of the Fashion Police. Shuttling from Michael Leva to Bob Mackie to Giorgio di Sant'Angelo to Richard Mishaan to Louis Dell'Olio, the pair had been doing their damnedest to copy the beatific placidity of the celebrated sunglassed ones in the shows' front rows, who were rightfully behaving as if they were being scrutinized as thoroughly as whatever was hanging from the models Naomi Campbell and Linda Evangelista. But by the time the sun was setting gently in the west and they were being crammed into the nether reaches of the Isaac Mizrahi show, this duo was in no mood to fold their legs way under and bring up the rear.

"So glad we rushed," snapped one, unswaddling an enormous faded-blue Pucci scarf (obviously inspired by the blue Pucci tights Polly Mellen had worn on Day One to Dolce & Gabbana). "The models just arrived," snorted the other. The two noted, but did not appreciate, the fact that half the standing-room-only crowd were not their jaded contemporaries but exuberant young fans of fashion's current wavy-haired wonder, most of whom couldn't have been more excited had this been the first night of the Blond Ambition tour.

"They think it's worth waiting an hour. To see what? If Naomi walks down in one more parka, I shoot."

Fortunately, her gun wasn't loaded, because it was close—Mizrahi's witty


"I was wondering if you could possibly return
the cup of Johnnie Walker Black Label you borrowed."

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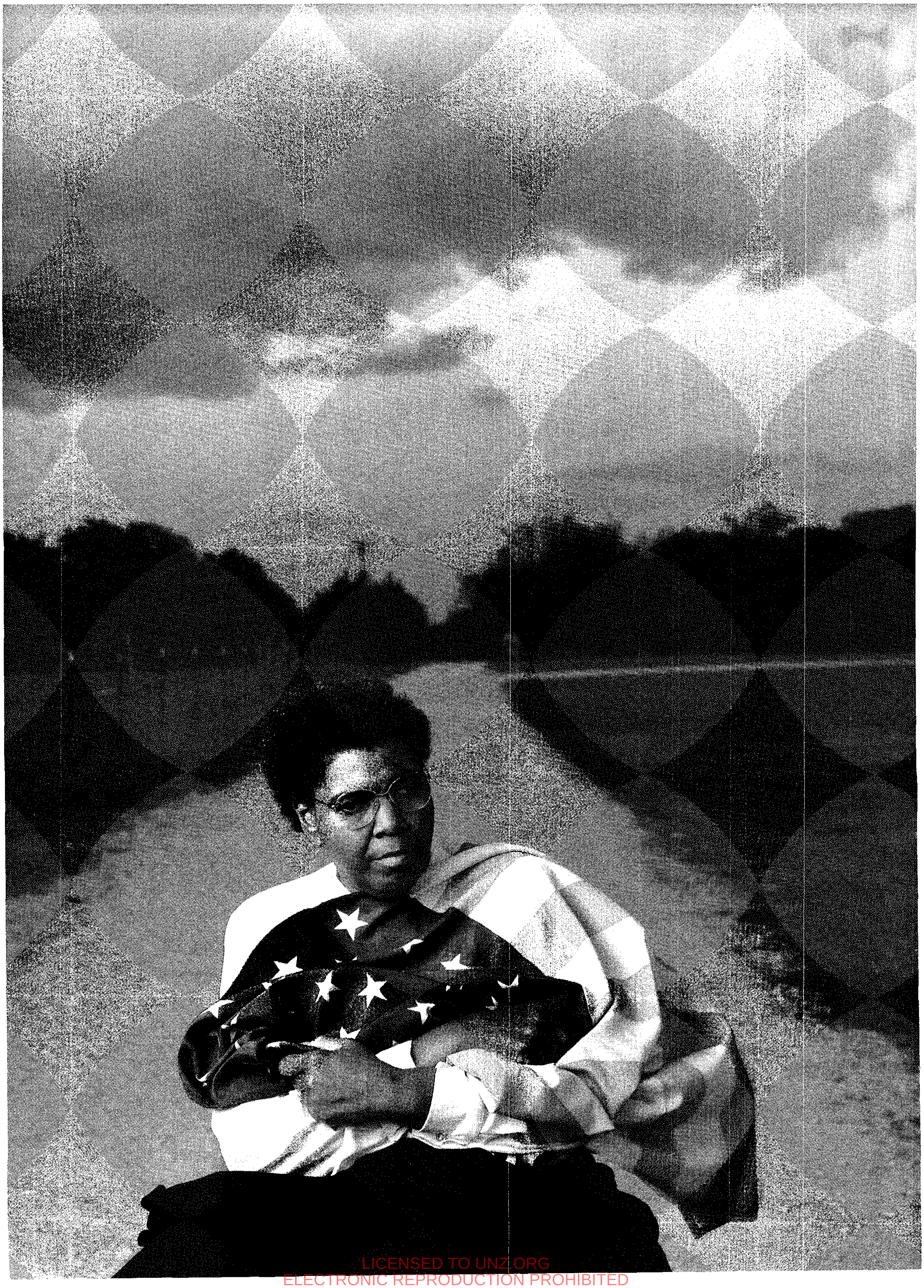

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press kit called the alpaca garment that materialized an "overcoat." It was apparent from the duo's conversation ("I can't believe Louis called gray 'elephant.' " "Why didn't he go all the way with a Dumbo tunic?") that Mizrahi's tongue-in-cheek colors of orangeade, green-tea ice cream, and creamsicle; a fabric labelled "peach fuzz"; and categories such as rain shirts, tiny pants, and Yogi Bear and Boo-Boo Bear for overcoats left the two less than thrilled. To pass the time, they guzzled from their Evian bottles (the week's most popular accessory), and grumbled about missing dinner and arriving late at the opera. They laughed once—when a writer from *Vanity Fair* got toro'd by a swirling poncho.

"All this for colors called 'soy' and 'bonsai,' " humphed the one reswaddling her Pucci scarf, trying to brush off the wild ovation at the end of the show. "Lemmings—they'll believe whatever *they* tell them," said the other, pointing in the direction of the sunglassed ones. "C'mon, we have to make it to the Grand Tier," urged the first. "Grab my coat, please." And so the other woman grabbed their two suède parkas and they left.

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

The Circus—The hundred and twentieth version of the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey three-ring show. (Madison Square Garden. Through April 29. For information about show times and tickets, call 563-8300.)

"Easter Extravaganza"—A stage show at Radio City Music Hall, with Bo-Peep, a rabbit, three sheep, a wolf, a tortoise, and, of course, the Rockettes. (Sixth Ave. at 50th St. Through April 23. For information about tickets, call 247-4777.)

"Crowbar"—A play, of sorts, written by Mac Wellman and performed in the old Victory Theatre. The score is by David Van Tieghem. (209 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8.)

"Downtown/Uptown"—April 17-18 at 7:30: "Terminal Hip," written by Mac Wellman; "This Is Not a Soap Box," by Richard Elovich and Gregg Bordowitz; and "World Without End," by Holly Hughes. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907.)

Karen Finley—Performing her new solo work, "We Keep Our Victims Ready." (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793. April 18-21 at 8:30.)

Karen Finley

ART

THE Jackson Pollock show at Gagosian—eight large "black enamel paintings" and a group of works on paper, including notebook drawings—is extraordinarily good. For one thing, it is an enormous relief to walk in and not find drip paintings. The American art world's promotion of "signature styles" has been so relentless that in many of our minds Pollock's famous formal breakthrough became either a fuzzily grandiose myth or an all too accessible cliché. The drips, for instance, can be demodeд quite easily and impertinently, and seen merely as avatars of nineteen-fifties wallpaper design. Recent biographical detective work that finds a subliminal connection between the drip style and the young Pollock's fascination with the sight of his father peeing in the fields out West adds a further gothic note to this kind of campiness.

The works at Gagosian, however, bring us back to the matter of Pollock's art, and of art in general. The enamel paintings, all from the early fifties, are, actually, characteristic of both the artist's and the period's styles. They are full of speeding calligraphic lines, blotches, Tachiste stains, action, and, yes, drips. But they are also implicitly figurative and specifically psychological (anxious, fraught, valiant, and probably paranoid), and in their compositions we immediately sense Pollock's deep admiration for and involvement with the tradition of history painting from, say, David and Delacroix up to Thomas Hart Benton and Orozco, with whom Pollock worked during the W.P.A. era.

Then there's Picasso and "Guernica." The notebook drawings are in this respect a revelation. In them we find a trove of unmistakably Picassoesque bulls' heads, of riffs on "Guernica" 's upturned horses' heads and bellicose huddles, as well as touching reprises of the superpotent Spaniard's "Satyricon" of erotically charged figures. One might gather from these sketches that Pollock was sexually rather shy, and—as one bull's head, half transformed into a painter's palette, suggests—preoccupied with transcending this reticence.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"Folon's Folons" is the blissfully self-explanatory title of a slim, simple show of works—fifty-odd watercolors, plus about a dozen found or transformed objects—made and owned by the well-known illustrator Jean-Michel Folon. . . . ¶ Twelve windows, as well as lamps and chandeliers, are among the seventy objects by the studios of Louis Comfort Tiffany on view. . . . ¶ Drawings from the collection of Ian Woodner, a real-estate developer, architect, and painter whose extraordinary procession of European works on paper extends from the fourteenth century to the early twentieth. The sections devoted to the German and French schools are especially strong. "Hare Beneath a Tree," by Hans Hoffmann (1530-91/92), for instance, and the assortment of drawings and pastels by Odilon Redon are first-round knockouts. Through May 13. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—The twist on Robert Moskowitz' brand of minimalist painting is that his central image is usually a representation of something phallic, and subtly so—a skyscraper, a cane, a smokestack. An exhilarating retrospective traces the motif's methodical evolution. Through May 1. . . . ¶ "Photography Until Now," a show of nearly three hundred works, examines the technological, commercial, and creative developments that have shaped the medium over the past century and a half. Through May 29. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—Before the museum closes to complete its restoration, visitors can see about a hundred and fifty paintings and sculptures (by Chagall, Kandinsky, Mondrian, Léger, Calder, Giacometti, and others) from the collection. Through April 29. (Open Tuesdays, 11 to 7:45, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 4:45.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—In "New Sculpture 1965-75: Between Geometry and Gesture," marvel of cool panache follows marvel of drop-dead elegance—all sprawled in perfect, if at times narcissistic, indolence over two monumental floors. The radical spirit of these works by Alan Saret, Lynda Benglis, Barry LeVa, Keith Sonnier, the late Robert Smithson, Bruce Nauman, Joel Shapiro, Richard Serra, Richard Tuttle, and the late Eva Hesse has apparently evolved into a state of profound and impeccably pomaded art-historical grace. The many triumphant pieces here have not lost their potency; on the contrary, they now appear seminal. Through May 20. (Open Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—"Czech Modernism: 1900-1945." There are some electrifying paintings in this show and a healthy and welcome selection of drawings, prints, and books, all of which give a strong sense of a vital, nearly volcanic exchange of ideas—the artists and painters of Prague seem to have devoured every kind of modern art that came their way. Through May 7. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 10 to 5.)

American Craft Museum, 40 W. 53rd St.—More than a hundred works by the fibre artist Lenore Tawney, including pieces with feathers, shells, and paper, from the fifties to the eighties. Starts April 18. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

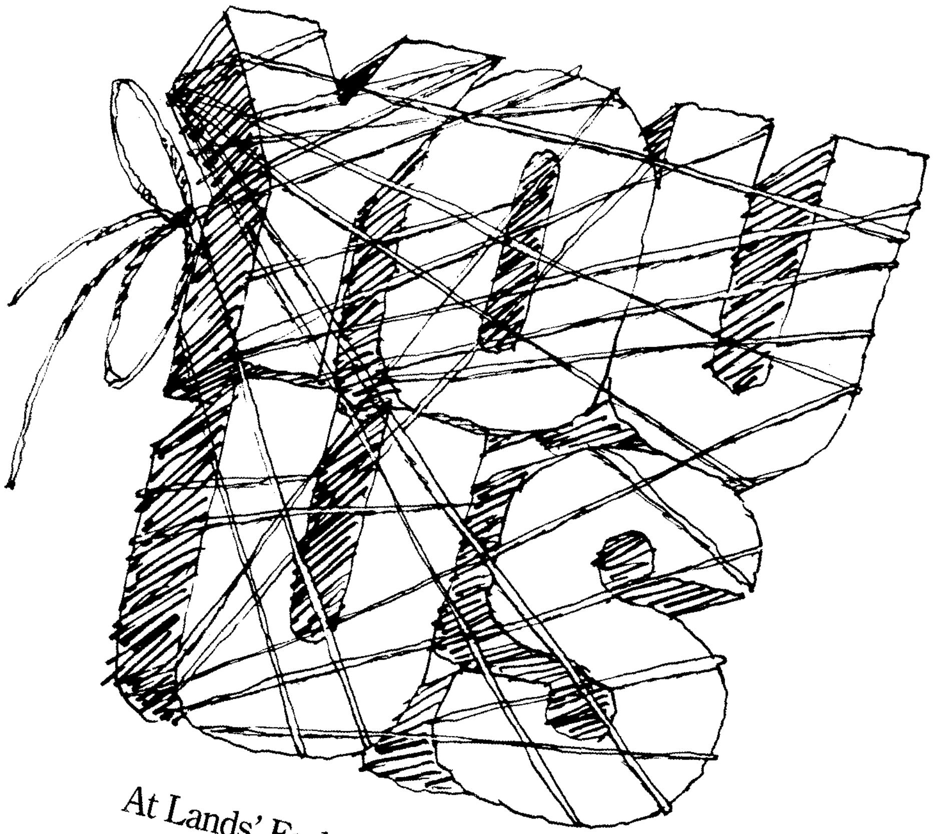
Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—Fabrics designed by large textile companies or by individual artisans in the past decade are presented on a grand scale—floor-to-ceiling lengths of cloth, for instance, and dramatic walk-through environments. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge from 5 to 9; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—A loan show from Düsseldorf of works by German artists whose paintings and drawings protested against the First World War and the Weimar Republic. The best known of the artists represented are Otto Dix, Käthe Kollwitz, and Max Ernst. Through May 23. (Open Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, noon to 5; Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Sundays, 11 to 6. Closed April 16-17.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—A show of more than a hundred illuminated manuscripts from fifteenth- and early-sixteenth-century Holland that indicates the influence these works had on later painters. Through May 6. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

National Academy of Design, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—Pen-and-ink and chalk drawings from the Renaissance by the brothers Taddeo and Federico Zuccaro. Through April 29. (Open Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—Spring training for non-players in a show called "Diamonds Are Forever," which offers the reflections of contemporary authors and artists on that most American of pastimes: baseball. The parks, players, equipment, and action are all immortalized, by fans such as Claes Oldenburg, Edna Ferber, Nicholas Nixon, Roger Angell, and Andy Warhol. Through April 21. (Gottesman Exhibition Hall. Open daily, except Sundays, 10 to 6.)



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Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—A show of contemporary sub-Saharan African paintings, collages, and sculptures that should inspire serious rethinking of such issues as cultural imperialism and the function of art within society. Through May 6. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Gregory Amenoff / Georg Baselitz—Recent paintings, made of pure pigment and rabbit-skin glue on board, several with quasi-religious Mexican themes. Because of his medium, Amenoff's colors are individually rich, but his sense of color is actually quite routine. Nothing really bounces out at you here. Likewise, his compositions are carefully wrought but as fixed as cement without ever being exactly iconic. Although many find Amenoff to be a very good painter, that may be because his work is at once formally self-important, unemotional, and easy to grasp. / An engaging group of works on paper: sixties cows and early-eighties upside-down figures. Through April 28. (Hirschl & Adler Modern, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St. Open Mondays.)

Biala—History books will not be rewritten to accommodate this eighty-six-year-old artist, who is the sister of the late Jack Tworkov and was married to Ford Madox Ford, but her very typical School of Paris paintings of rooftops, piazzas, and interiors with open windows are highly skilled and pleasant. Through April 21. (Kouros, 23 E. 73rd St.)

Larry Poons—A selection of paintings from the sixties on, most of them from the eighties and the immediate past. In many of Poons' more recent works, color is downplayed and the old two-dimensional, elliptical dots have become real rubber balls, discernible under globs of seemingly masticated and upchucked paint. These may be ugly, or not. "Over and Up" (1983), for instance, contains a surprisingly delicate, dawnlike passage at the upper left, and may remind some viewers of paintings by André Masson; and "Rattled" (1990), with its tomtom rhythm and assortment of different-sized balls, is a funny and rambunctious work, despite its heavy poundage. Through April 30. (Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. Open Mondays.)

David Smith (1906–65)—Throughout his career this titan of nonobjective sculpture continually sketched the nude, an interest represented in a selection of his inky drawings and paintings from 1927 to 1964. Some recall Picasso, others Pollock; many are cartoonish. None approach the eloquence of even the artist's weakest sculptures. Through April 26. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St.)

Short List—Hannelore Baron, Schlesinger, 822 Madison Ave., at 69th St. (through April 21); **Jackson Pollock,** Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St. (through June 2); **Reeve Schley,** Graham Modern, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St. (through April 28); **Aaron Shikler,** Davis & Langdale, 231 E. 60th St. (through April 28).

GALLERIES—57th STREET AREA

Dennis Adams—In this show, the artist—best known for creating bus shelters that contain large photographic transparencies—has established a fascinating dialogue between representations of the simultaneous overthrows of two repressive regimes. On one side of the gallery, Adams has hung two teller's windows, each backed with a transparency of a Romanian martyr that is best seen reflected in the mirror installed a few inches away. The images, with their coffinlike presentation and their third-hand viewing, are so potent and still that the implied link between revolution and finance slips away. On the other side of the gallery, four unadorned bus shelters stand before a photomural of Noriega's destroyed bunker. The show is supplemented by an excellent book, documenting some of the artist's most pungent political works. Through May 8. (Kent, 41 E. 57th St.)

Robert Arneson—Very edgy paintings on paper, drawings on canvas, and ceramic sculptures. One sculpture, titled "Chief Executive Officer," is a highly charged and immediate portrayal of a street-tough black man with piercing, hostile eyes; the other depicts a white-bread nerd and is titled "Rapist & Drug Dealer." Through April 28. (Frumkin-Adams, 50 W. 57th St.)

Eva Hesse at the Whitney

Richard Deacon / Thomas Schütte—Recent sculpture by this master of the heavy-metal seam: welts, screws, bolts, etc. are the erogenous zones in most of Deacon's work. Mixed metaphors—wherein, for instance, the organic is apt to seem mechanical, and vice versa—form part of their driving intelligence. Here, among other things, we find a fascinating shape, in stapled copperplate, that simultaneously suggests a giant jester's cap, Pegasus' wing, and a sack of shad roe. / A group of seriocomic watercolors of this 'n' that. Many have messages in English, in the humorously blunt, not quite fluent style that is the fashion today among satirically inclined German artists. Through April 28. (Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Red Grooms—Strictly sideshow stuff. What this clever entertainer can do is carve chunks of wood into grunting musclemen; assemble a massive construction of Red Square with a jet-filled sky of shooting orthogonals; paint an offhand portrait of Gorbachev and frame it with a jewelled icon casing of tooled aluminum; create monotypes of uncommon energy; even deliver a viewer-operated mariachi band—all of which, and more, he does in this show. What he cannot do, it seems, is create an art work that becomes richer—or even sustains interest—with multiple viewings. Through April 28. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

David Humphrey—A strong show of recent paintings by an artist who combines a lapidary imagistic style with elements of biomorphic abstraction and a clever, kinky neo-Surrealism. Humphrey has a sophisticated understanding of the traditional relationship between (primal, dream-based) Surrealism and (effete, dandyish) connoisseurship. His fetishistic imagery is at once humorously sexual, knowingly decorative, and theatrically arch. "Esprit de Corps," for instance, with its "curtain" of actual girls' ponytails, is a minor instant classic of the genre. Through May 3. (McKee, 41 E. 57th St.)

Ron Janowich / James Brown—The split-circle format so effectively introduced in the artist's last show has become programmatic in these new paintings, yet the transparent stripes and kinetic, calligraphic strokes are still masterful, if somewhat anemic. / One dark ceramic sculpture of a featureless bust has a certain forcefulness, but others, with rounded towers whose surfaces have been heavily worked in a display of great virtuosity, are little more than scatological. Through April 28. (Galerie Lelong, 20 W. 57th St.)

Valerie Jaudon—As always, Jaudon's paintings look deceptively simple. All that remains of her former "pattern painting" is the compulsively beautiful brushstrokes; her arching curves and circles now add up to nothing less than an abstract female iconography. Through April 21. (Janis, 110 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Roberto Juarez / Jiří Georg Dokoupil—Recent paintings: a series titled "Days of the Year." These light, elegant works—in tones of parchment, tan, black, and white—are variations on a semi-abstract theme. The striped, black-and-white motif suggests a costume—the clothing, perhaps, of an acrobat or a Pierrot figure. The backgrounds evoke the climate of, for instance, North Africa or southern Spain. The artist spends about half his time in Miami. Edward Albee lives around there, too, and his essay for Juarez, on a single typeset page, is a quixotic, romantic hoot. / Also, a group of sepia-toned renderings of babies' clothes by the irrepressible Dokoupil, made of honest-to-God "mothers' milk," which the artist got from a hospital and burned into his canvases—thus the caramelized color. "Dip it in, put it on, burn it," he announces on a flyer. "With the help of mothers, I tried to get gold." Through April 28. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

Stephen Posen—An engaging artist who combines Pop imagery with a sincere, abstract, painterly style. In "Soho Stories," for instance, characters from "Krazy Kat" appear in a kind of existential picaresque—in one painting they are "Waiting for Van Gogh." But Posen's grounds are often subtly painted and quite lyrical. Here and there one is reminded of Baselitz' impressionistic brushiness, of Larry Rivers' emotive scumbling, and even, in a work titled "Texas and California," of Whistler's super-aesthetic butterfly logo. Through April 28. (McCoy, 41 E. 57th St.)

Richard Pousette-Dart—White-on-white paintings from the fifties. These pristine, labor-intensive works are exquisitely realized and include lots of minute textural detail—spidery webs of pencil lines, for instance, within filigreed architectonic structures. They bring to mind Monet's haystacks, cathedrals, and other serial works, and they also fit in with the neoplastic trends of their period. They don't seem particularly relevant right now, but no matter: they'll probably once again have their day. Through April 28. (Marisa del Re, 41 E. 57th St.)

David True—True has become a real conundrum. He has an interesting mind but questionable taste—or something. He is a deft painter with a misfiring sense of irony. These pulpy new paintings, with their shamelessly kitschy *japonisme* and their cornball allusions to Diebenkorn, are dreadful. Through April 21. (Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St.)

Jane Wilson—No matter what time of day Wilson depicts in these somewhat Dutch and quite traditional low-horizon paintings of fields and oceans, it always looks like dusk—with light fractured into gorgeous gradations of the whole spectrum of color. Through April 25. (Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St.)

"The Great Decade"—There's no irony intended by the title of this show, which pays homage to the sixties generation of color-field artists and painterly abstractionists, many of whom the Emmerich gallery has represented for several decades. There are certainly some dynamic works here: two pieces by Al Held that explore how to stretch the rectangle while retaining it, a sideways chevron painting by Kenneth Noland, and a typical Jules Olitski from 1965 that could very well be a portrayal of breath. But the overriding spirit of the exhibition is of an art form that so totally depleted its own language that painting is still attempting to recover. Through April 28. (41 E. 57th St.)

Short List—Sonia Gechtoff, Kraushaar, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through April 25); **Arthur Gibbons,** Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. (through April 21); **Keith Jacobshagen,** Babcock, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through May 3); **Alan Johnston,** Tilton, 24 W. 57th St. (through April 28); **Alain Kirili,** Holly Solomon, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (open Mondays, through April 21); **Ibram Lassaw,** Deutsch, 29 W. 57th St. (through April 25); **John Marin,** Kennedy, 40 W. 57th St. (through April 28); **Emily Mason** and **Wolf Kahn,** Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through May 2); **Leigh Palmer,** French, 41 W. 57th St. (through April 28); **Pablo Picasso,** Krugier, 41 E. 57th St. (through April 28); **Robert Ryman,** Pace, 32 E. 57th St. (through May 10).

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GALLERIES—SoHo

Richard Artschwager—Each of these seven paintings, mostly from 1972, depicts the same Atlantic City hotel at the moment of its demolition. They have the miragelike effect characteristic of virtually all the artist's works, but in this instance the impression of smudged glass enhances the images perfectly. As a group, they are monuments to the constant recycling and remaking that obsesses our culture, and as such they describe the postmodern impulse brilliantly. Through April 28. (Boone, 417 West Broadway.)

John Bowman—A show of hard-to-read drawings of Viennese platz scenes that are an anti-minimalist picturemaker's version of Rauschenberg's erased de Kooning drawing. The artist has created these misty perspectives by erasing portions of an even, minimalist field of rubbed graphite, from which the images emerge. The elongated horizontal and vertical views have a great sense of panorama, but they are too reminiscent of Troy Brauntuch's picturemaking, of which they are the inverse. Through April 28. (Lang & O'Hara, 568 Broadway.)

Terry Winters

Ian Hamilton Finlay—The artist's folly-filled garden in the Scottish countryside—a series of outdoor sculptures combining classical images and revolutionary ideas—is a legendary, if physically inaccessible, creation. Less well known here are Finlay's roots in concrete poetry, a crucial aspect of his work that is evident in this beautiful show of recent pieces, which consist simply of words and phrases painted on the gallery's walls, in which each change of typeface or color is exquisite and meaningful. Also included are some works from the sixties and seventies that are more purely concrete poetry. Through April 21. (Burgin, 130 Prince St.)

César Galicia—Technique-burdened Photo-Realist paintings and drawings, many of joyless women and motorcycles against etched walls. Through April 21. (Staempfli, 415 West Broadway.)

Hans Haacke—This formidable artist is getting sharper in his search for intelligent forms for his own brand of Naderism. The most resonant work in an exceptionally compelling show documents a piece Haacke erected in Graz, Austria, representing the verve with which the Austrians embraced Hitler; included is a text describing the debate—and, ultimately, the violence—the piece inspired. Haacke is capable of an occasional clinker—for instance, a very Pop cigarette package concerned with the N.E.A., Jesse Helms, and Philip Morris. Among the stronger works are remakes of Picasso and Braque collages of smokers, updated with newspaper fragments concerned with smoking's cost to society. One excerpt is a distressing piece of information about a large donation made by Philip Morris, a company with a purportedly enlightened arts-sponsorship program, to the Jesse Helms Center Foundation; this feeds back into other Haacke works and suggests that the corporation wants to have it both ways. Through April 22. (Weber, 142 Greene St.)

Robert Mangold—Eccentricity is the last word one would think to apply to the work of the most restrained of the minimalists. But there is the suggestion of a wacky shape, an oval face, and some pleasurable brushwork in these new, two-part shaped canvases, which are also perhaps the artist's most sensual. Diehards can rest assured, though: there is a strict geometry peeking through the liver-red paint and chalky gray atmosphere. Through April 24. (Cooper, 155 Wooster St.)

Robert Morris—Remakes of early-sixties minimalist sculptures that exhibit a unique psychological S & M—a grouping of three cagelike metal "L"s are particularly engaging—and recent lead reliefs that reprocess earlier motifs from the work of this artist and others. Through April 28. (Castelli, 420 West Broadway.)

Joseph Nechvatal—These computer-generated and robotically "painted" works are so overloaded with mechanically derived images, layered and manipulated to the point of meltdown, and so lacking in sensate pleasure, that they are hard to like—but that, of course, is the point. Through April 25. (Alexander, 59 Wooster St.)

John Okulick—Tricky wood reliefs of geometric shapes in forced illusionistic perspective—an advanced version of the old cube-drawing game—and two strong but facile mythopoetic drawings of waves and a waterfall. Through April 25. (Hoffman, 429 West Broadway.)

Vettor Pisani—A cloyingly rococo show of mixed-media works. Many of them—like a plastic rose smothered with red pigment in an elaborate plate-glass enclosure held together with red clamps—are overdesigned and overromanticized in an way only an Italian artist can do. Through April 28. (Shainman, 560 Broadway.)

Ray Smith—Huge paintings, in oil and wax on wood, in which the scale of the great Mexican muralists (Rivera, Orozco, Siqueiros) is combined with the strangeness and psychological intensity of Frida Kahlo, as well as with some of the perverse sophistries of Picabia and his more recent disciples. One particularly ambitious work, titled "Guernimex," is based on you know what, while others include traditional satirical devices—for instance, theatrical human heads on animal bodies—that may have been borrowed from the eighteenth-century English artist James Gillray and from the twentieth-century Mexican Posada, among others. These are terrifically vivid, powerfully designed and pigmented works that are a lot of fun to see. They are, however, very calculated and very showy, with more bark, perhaps, than bite. Through April 21. (Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St.)

Wolfgang Staehle—Cutting attacks on the art system and the media executed with great style and wit. Half the works are assemblages with miniature video screens; they are handsome, crisp, and smart. The other half are self-consciously arty—three Carl Andre-type wood pedestals, for example, with "Reservierт" signs atop them and framed misprinted newspaper pages behind them. Through April 21. (Koury Wingate, 578 Broadway.)

Ted Stamm (1945-84)—The urge to fly speaks through these mild yet skillful post-minimalist paintings, some of which contain a black Concorde-nose form on a beak-shaped raw canvas. Through April 28. (Lorence-Monk, 578 Broadway.)

Not Vital—A somewhat zany series of poetic sculptures, ranging from a very long Tibetan horn in plaster with a pencil-point end, to a gathering of tall bronze poles capped with cast camel heads, and, quite literally, a golden calf. Through April 28. (Marcus, 578 Broadway.)

Meg Webster—Lovely primal-form sculptures. One work, a concave plywood cone whose interior is coated with a thick layer of dirt, is a luscious Earth Mother image. And two standing coffins of beeswax must be the best-smelling pieces in town. But a moss-covered soil ball, which could be the female version of the "2001" monolith, is subverted by its glass, wood, and steel enclosure. Through April 28. (Gladstone, 99 Greene St.)

Terry Winters—In his most recent paintings, Winters introduces a new imagistic motif: a rubbery-looking form that, as it is manipulated, seems variously facial, labial, uterine, prophylactic, obsolescent, and extraterrestrial. In at least one work, for instance, it evokes something like a First World War gas mask, while in another it suggests a close encounter with a hovering mother ship, and in yet others it denotes an ambiguously comic, or else fuguelike, view of sex. (One is reminded here of Philip Roth's huge, floating Breast.) In any case, this flexible new device has been liberating for Winters—a commanding, if at times ponderous, artist—and in one large painting, titled "The Psychological Corporation," he has even allowed himself a giddier, more buoyant interlude with color. Through April 21. (Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway.)

Betty Woodman—It's always refreshing to see this ceramist's work. Her new, toucanlike vases have fanciful capes and are coated with luscious spotted and swirled glazes. Much to her credit, Woodman's works look sculptural and painterly without ever seeming pretentious. Through April 28. (Protetch, 560 Broadway.)

"The Fifth Essence"—The curator Frederieke Taylor has gathered a varied, somewhat uneven, but mostly fascinating assortment of works concerned with alchemical transformation; many of them take on greater depth in this context. There's a fine metal-powder-and-paper work by Ching Ho Cheng (who died as a result of the vapors from the materials he worked with); a salted piece of copper by Eve Laramee that refers to Dante's burial in a crypt submerged in water; and a sweet piece by Gordon Matta-Clark, a wall fragment—from Food, the SoHo restaurant he started—with a scribbled recipe, which, in this company, one presumes is more for spiritual than for nutritional consumption. There are also context-setting works by Duchamp and Beuys. Through April 21. (Gracie Mansion Gallery, 532 Broadway.)

Short List—**DENNIS ASHBAUGH,** Kasmin, 580 Broadway (through May 8); **BILL BARRETTE,** Fiction-Nonfiction, 21 Mercer St. (through April 28); **BÅRD BREIVIK,** Germans van Eck, 420 West Broadway (through April 28); **ALEXANDER BRODSKY AND ILYA UTKIN,** Feldman, 31 Mercer St. (through April 28); **JEANNE DUNNING,** Feature, 484 Broome St. (through May 5); **ANDREA EVANS,** Postmasters, 80 Greene St. (through April 21); **FUTURA 2000,** Briet, 558 Broadway (through May 5); **JOAN GARDNER,** 55 Mercer Street Gallery (through April 21); **RAOUL HAGUE,** Lennon, Weinberg, 580 Broadway (through May 12); **LESTER JOHNSON,** Gimpel, 415 West Broadway (through April 28); **MIKE KELLEY,** Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St. (through May 12); **HAI KNAFO,** O.K. Harris, 383 West Broadway (through April 28); **LEONARD KOSCIANSKI,** Kind, 136 Greene St. (through May 9); **STEPHEN PRINA,** Luhring Augustine, 130 Prince St. (through April 21); **DAVID RABINOWITCH,** Flynn, 113 Crosby St. (opens at 1, except Saturdays, through June 30); **ARCHIE RAND,** Hanson, 415 West Broadway (through April 28); **WOLFGANG ROBBE,** Gibson, 568 Broadway (through April 21); **MIRIAM SCHAPIRO,** Steinbaum, 132 Greene St. (through May 5); **JANE SCHNEIDER,** Kelly, 591 Broadway (through May 5); **ANDREW SPENCE,** Toll, 146 Greene St. (through May 12); **HIROSHI TESHIGAHARA,** 65 Thompson Street Gallery (through May 12); **MICHAEL VENEZIA,** Roeder, 545 Broadway (closed Tuesdays, through May 3); **KAY WALKINGSTICK,** M-13, at 72 Greene St. (through April 21); **WILLIAM WEGMAN,** Sperone Westwater, 121 Greene St. (through May 5).

OTHER GALLERIES

Frank Holliday—Very energetic, soupy paintings with lots of drips, most in periwinkle blue and pale pink, with touches of fire-engine red and lime green. Through April 28. (Cugliani, 508 Greenwich St., at Spring St.)

Gerhard Richter—An important series of works, concerned with the suspicious deaths of members of the revolutionary/terrorist Baader-Meinhof group, serves as a stark counterpoint to the German painter's recent two-gallery show. In dark, saturnine grisaille paintings, derived from news photographs, Richter takes on the very complex task of representing history. Through April 21. (Grey Art Gallery, New York University, 33 Washington Pl.)

Charles Saxon (1920-88)—Original watercolors for *New Yorker* covers, plus cartoons and sketchbooks. Through June 29. (Butler Library, Columbia University, 6th floor, Broadway at 114th St. Mondays through Fridays, 9 to 4:45.)

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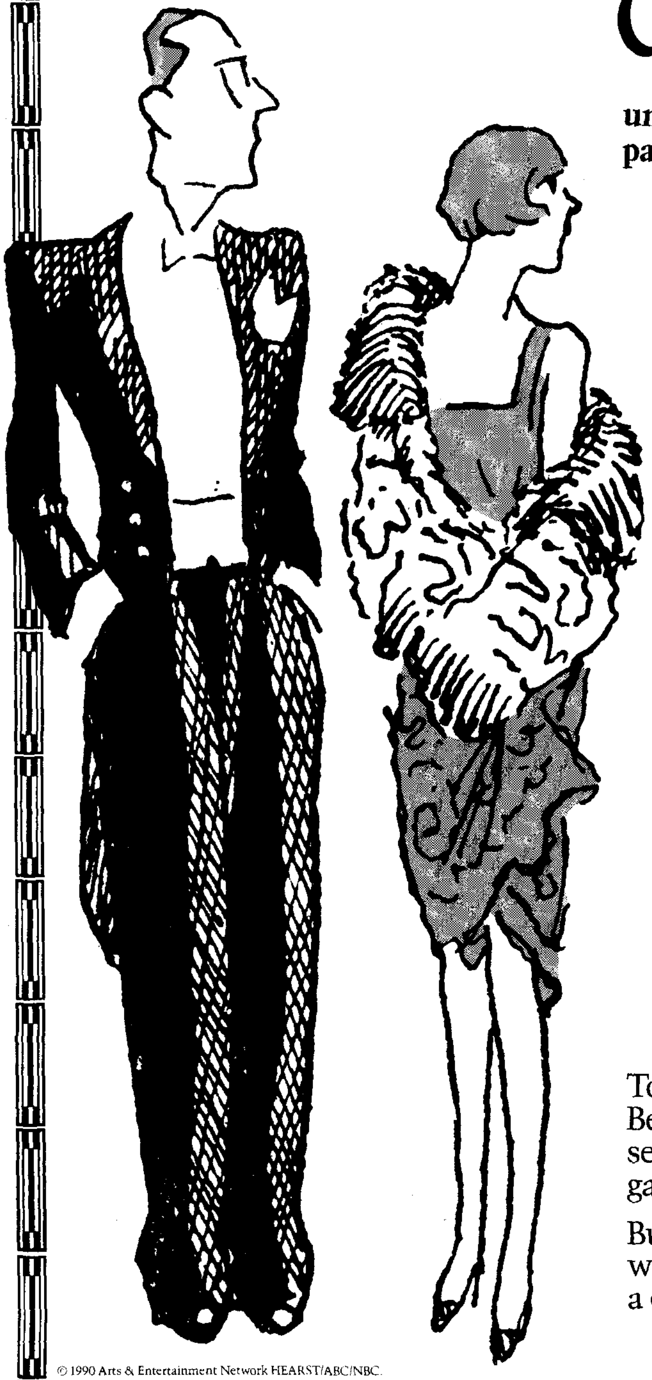

Tommy and Tuppence Beresford are in search of a dangerous new game to play.

But if they're not careful, what they find could prove a deadly diversion.

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PHOTOGRAPHY

John Gutmann's show at Castelli Graphics, at 578 Broadway, includes a generous dose of pictures covering more than fifty years of this intelligent photographer's work. All the photographs involve writing in one way or another, and this underlying theme makes for an exhibition that holds together well. It doesn't get didactic, because the kind of writing captured in the photographs keeps changing, and because Gutmann, like all good photographers, is a sharp editor. This makes for arresting images, such as a closeup of two feet that have been tattooed with a cheery "GOOD LUCK"—one letter on each toe, except for the little ones. Gutmann's work looks at once old and contemporary. A photograph of a shop that identifies itself as The Chicken Pharmacy is redolent with symbols of the thirties, while a more recent picture of a neon sign in the sky that says "Lost" reminded us of the electronic messages Jenny Holzer has been sending out to the world for the past decade.

Bernd and Hilla Becher—Exquisite black-and-white photographs from the past twenty-five years. The images are of industrial structures—gas tanks, grain elevators, water towers. Through June 22. (Dia Art Foundation, 548 W. 22nd St. Opens at noon Thursdays through Sundays.)

Czech Modernism: 1900-1945—A show of a hundred and eighty-five black-and-white photographs, in conjunction with the exhibition of paintings, sculptures, and works on paper at the Brooklyn Museum. Through May 13. (International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Short List—**victor friedman,** Witkin, 415 West Broadway (opens Saturdays at noon, through May 26); **john gutmann,** Castelli Graphics, 578 Broadway (through April 28); **larry johnson,** 303 Gallery, 89 Greene St. (through April 28); **david la chappelle,** Trabia, 54 Greene St. (through May 12); **lee miller** (through June 10) and **marion post wolcott** (through June 24), International Center of Photography Midtown, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St. (daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 8); **nic nicosia,** Facchetti, 476 Broadway (through April 28); **irving penn,** Pace-MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. (through April 28); **eliot porter,** Danziger, 415 West Broadway (through May 5); **eve sonneman,** Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (open Mondays, through April 28).

MUSIC

While opera administrators around the world fret and cogitate over the Manricos and Tristans of the future, a very different kind of tenor, almost a Manrico antipode, is quietly celebrating his twentieth year on the concert stage. Paul Sperry has only a modest portion of actual voice, which would seem a singer's chief commodity, but he has surpluses of songfulness, curiosity, and intelligence. These have commended him to dozens of composers, eminent collaborators such as James Levine and Zubin Mehta, hundreds of students who have been through his master classes, and a specialized, enthusiastic segment of the musical public. We long ago lost count of the important premières Mr. Sperry has given, but we have not lost the recollection of his engaging, generous platform manner or of his unaffected enthusiasm for the neglected corners of the song literature.

Mr. Sperry's current schedule in New York gives a capsule version of his repertoire: on April 17, a recital with Irma Vallecillo at the Juilliard School, where he teaches; two days later, a New York première ("Evening Scenes," by Dan Welcher) at Columbia University's concert hall, on 116th Street; and three days after that a Carnegie Hall appearance as the Evangelist in Bach's St. Matthew Passion, with the Brooklyn Philharmonic.

In a way, Mr. Sperry has been a Peter Pears without a Benjamin Britten, or a Pierre Bernac without a Francis Poulenc: both those earlier singers were identified with a body of immediately and deeply memorable music. Through that embassy their somewhat unconventional merits were made familiar to the public, and they could assume (Pears especially) a central role in the musical lives of their countries. Mr. Sperry has not yet been quite so fortunate. But one of the American works scheduled for his Juilliard program—Robert Beaser's cycle "The Seven Deadly Sins"—has shown staying power already, and who knows how grateful we may be to him one day for other music he has championed.

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Alice Tully Hall 362-1911; for Avery Fisher Hall 874-2424; for Carnegie Hall 247-7800; and for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—**die fledermaus,** with Barbara Daniels, Harolyn Blackwell, Helga Dernesch, Tonio di Paolo, and Thomas Allen; conducted by Hermann Michael. (April 16 and April 19 at 8.) . . . **don giovanni,** a new production, with Marilyn Mims, Ashley Putnam, Dawn Upshaw, Gösta Winbergh, Ferruccio Furlanetto, and Samuel Ramey; James Levine. (April 17 at 8.) . . . With Carol Vaness, Ashley Putnam, Kaaren Erickson, Gösta Winbergh, Ferruccio Furlanetto, and Samuel Ramey; James Levine. (April 20 at 8) . . . **il barbiere di siviglia,** with Kathleen Battle, Gino Quilico, Frank Lopardo, and Carlos Feller; Julius Rudel. (April 18 and April 25 at 8.) . . . With Kathleen Battle, Pablo Elvira, Frank Lopardo, and Carlos Feller; Julius Rudel. (April 21 at 8:30) . . . **götterdämmerung,** with Hildegard Behrens, Hanna Lisowska, Christa Ludwig, Siegfried Jerusalem, Matti Salminen, and Anthony Raffell; James Levine. (April 21 at noon.) . . . **das rheingold,** with Mari-Anne Häggender, Christa Ludwig, Birgitta Svendén, Siegfried Jerusalem, and James Morris; James Levine (April 23 at 8.) . . . **die walküre,** with Hildegard Behrens, Jessye Norman, Christa Ludwig, Gary Lakes, James Morris, and Matti Salminen; James Levine. (April 24 at 6.)

Amato Opera Company—Presenting "La Bohème." (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. April 21 at 7:30 and April 22 at 2:30.)

Juilliard American Opera Center—A fully staged version of Ralph Vaughan Williams' "Hugh the Drover," directed by Frank Corsaro. (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. April 25 and April 27 at 8, and April 29 at 3. For tickets, call 874-7515.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall, Leonard Slatkin conducting. April 17 at 7:30: A program of works by Haydn, Paul Creston, and Elgar; with Joseph Alessi, trombone. . . . ¶ April 19-21 at 8, and April 24 at 7:30: With Emanuel Ax, piano, in works by Mozart, Bolcom, and Tchaikovsky.

Philadelphia Orchestra—Charles Dutoit conducting works by Frank Martin, Haydn, and Ravel. With Paul Tortelier, cello, vocal soloists, and the Choral Arts Society of Philadelphia. (Carnegie Hall. April 24 at 8.)

Brooklyn Philharmonic—Lukas Foss conducting the Concertworld Chorale in Bach's St. Matthew Passion. With Carolann Page, soprano; Rose Taylor, mezzo-soprano; Paul Sperry and Kenn Hicks, tenors; Roger Roloff, baritone; and Norman Andresson, bass. (Carnegie Hall. April 22 at 8.)

Jupiter Symphony—Robert Mann conducting; with Charles Neidich, clarinet. (Alice Tully Hall. April 23 at 8.)

"The Cat and the Fiddle"—John McGlinn conducting the Jerome Kern–Otto Harbach musical. With Cris Groenendaal and Judy Kaye, among others, and an orchestra. (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. April 18 at 8, April 19 at 7:30, April 20-21 at 8, and April 22 at 3 and 8.)

St. Cecilia Chorus and Orchestra—David Randolph conducting Bach's Mass in B Minor, with Louise Wohlafka, soprano; Antoinette Hardin, mezzo-soprano; Grayson Hirst, tenor; and Kevin Deas, bass. (Carnegie Hall. April 20 at 8.)

Riverside Choral Society—Performing masses of three centuries. (Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. at 120th St. April 22 at 3. Admission by contribution.)

Goliard Chorale—Patricia Handy directing. With a chamber ensemble. (Merkin Concert Hall. April 22 at 7:30.)

National Chorale—Martin Josman directing a program of works by Bach, Brahms, and James Bassi. (Avery Fisher Hall. April 25 at 7:30.)

RECITALS

Paul Sperry and Irma Vallecillo—Tenor and piano. (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. April 17 at 8. For information about free tickets, call 874-7515.)

Horacio Gutièrrez—Piano. (Carnegie Hall. April 18 at 8.)

Frederica von Stade—Soprano. (Avery Fisher Hall. April 18 at 8.)

Pamela Frank—Violin. With accompanist Wu Han. (Alice Tully Hall. April 19 at 8.)

Elly Ameling—Soprano. With the Alexander String Quartet, in a program of works by Haydn, Brahms, Wolf, and Fauré. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. April 19 at 8.)

Voices of Change—A Dallas-based ensemble performing with Paul Sperry, tenor. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. April 19 at 8. For information about tickets, call 307-7171.)

Twentieth-Century Music—Claire Heldrich conducting the Manhattan Contemporary Ensemble in works by Rand Steiger, Steve Reich, George Crumb, and Ursula Mamlock. (Borden Auditorium, Manhattan School of Music, Broadway at 122nd St. April 19 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Guarneri Quartet—In two concerts. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. April 21 at 8 . . . ¶ Alice Tully Hall, April 25 at 8.)

Richard Stoltzman and Richard Goode—Clarinet and piano. With Lucy Stoltzman, violin. (Carnegie Hall. April 21 at 8.)

Chanticleer—A vocal ensemble from Johannesburg in a program that includes works by Byrd, Elgar, and two South African composers. (St. Bartholomew's Church, Park Ave. at 50th St. April 22 at 3. Admission by contribution.)

Composers String Quartet—Playing works by Britten, Mario Davidovsky, and Schubert. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. April 22 at 3.)

Music and More—Presenting a concert of chamber works by Mendelssohn. (Merkin Concert Hall. April 22 at 3.)

Music Before 1800—Presenting harpsichordist Louis Bagger, who will play Bach's Goldberg Variations. (Corpus Christi Church, W. 121st St., just east of Broadway. April 22 at 4. Tickets at the door on the day of the performance.)

Oxford String Quartet—Performing works by Shostakovich, Ravel, and Beethoven. (Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St. 288-0700. April 22 at 5.)

Kiri Te Kanawa—Soprano. With the Orchestra of St. Luke's, conducted by Julius Rudel. (Avery Fisher Hall. April 22 at 7:30.)

Mieczyslaw Horszowski—Piano. (Carnegie Hall. April 23 at 8.)

André Emelianoff—Cello, with assisting artists. (Church of the Ascension, Fifth Ave. at 10th St. 254-8620. April 23 at 8.)

Mannes Contemporary Festival 1990—The Mannes Contemporary Ensemble and the Mannes Percussion Ensemble in a series of three free performances. At the Mannes College of Music: April 23 at 8, works by John Bergamo, Edgar Varèse, and others. . . . April 25 at 8, works by Tan Dun, Elliott Carter, and others. (150 W. 85th St.). . . . ¶ At the New School: April 26 at 6, works by Thomson, Cage, Copland, and others. (66 W. 12th St.)

Peabody Trio—In a program that includes works by Shostakovich, Schubert, and Bright Sheng. (Alice Tully Hall. April 24 at 8.)

Collage—A chamber-music ensemble from Boston performing twentieth-century works. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. April 24 at 8.)

Grant Johannesen—Piano. Performing a chamber-music program with the Shanghai String Quartet. (Merkin Concert Hall. April 25 at 8.)

JAZZ / POP / ROCK PERSONAL APPEARANCES

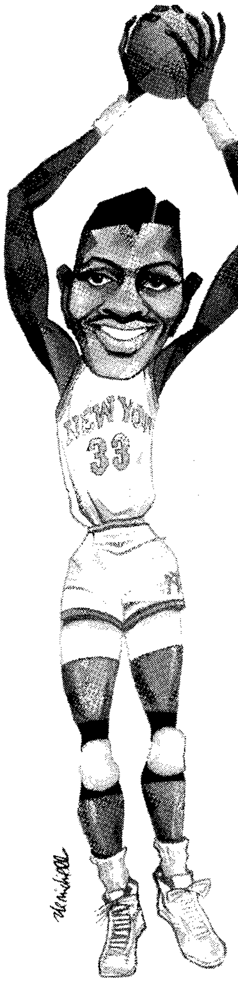
Rush—Despite its musical sophistication and its ability to fill rock arenas, this Canadian power-rock trio has been anything but a critics' darling. Rush has always suffered from lyrics that seemed like afterthoughts, and chopped-up song structures that existed merely to show off ingenious bridging devices and a lightning-fast ability to shift moods. The good news is that Rush's new album, "Presto," has songs that swing hard; the bad news is that the words, like the vestigially druggy name of the band, still seem like offhand holdovers from the deepest, darkest seventies. (Meadowlands Arena. 1-201 935-3900. April 20 at 8 and April 25 at 7:30. . . . ¶ Nassau Coliseum. 1-516 422-9222. April 22 at 7:30.)

Claude Bolling—Winter Garden, World Financial Center, Battery Park City. April 19 at 7. No tickets necessary.

Chris Cochrane—P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288. April 20 at 11.

Keith Jarrett—Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. April 21 at 8.

Indigo Girls—With Kris McKay. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. April 23-24 at 8.)



Patrick Ewing

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

Mets—Vs. the Chicago Cubs, April 17-18 at 7:35 and April 19 at 3:05. . . . ¶ Vs. the Montreal Expos, April 20 at 7:35, April 21 at 1:15, and April 22 at 1:35. . . . ¶ Vs. the Atlanta Braves, April 24-25 at 7:35.

Yankees—Vs. the Seattle Mariners, April 24-26 at 7:30.

Knicks—Vs. the Miami Heat, April 16 at 7:30. . . . ¶ Vs. the Atlanta Hawks, April 20 at 8:30.

Nets—Vs. the Cleveland Cavaliers, April 18 at 7:30. . . . ¶ Vs. the Orlando Magic, April 22 at 7.

(The Mets play at Shea Stadium, 1-718 507-8499; the Yankees play at Yankee Stadium, 293-6000; the Knicks play at Madison Square Garden, 563-8300; and the Nets play at the Meadowlands, 1-201 935-3900.)

RACING

Horses—At Aqueduct: Races take place daily, except April 24, at 1. . . . **Trotting** at Yonkers Raceway: Weeknights at 8 and Tuesdays at 1. . . . ¶ At the Meadowlands: Weeknights at 7:30.

Men and Women—The Trevira Twosome, a ten-mile road race for the fastest couples (men and women runners), begins at 10:30 on April 21 in Central Park, near the W. 72nd St. entrance.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Earth Day—April 22, a tribute to earth, sky, water, trees, fishes, furry mammals, bugs, and every other thing that lives. Laura Foreman, the artist, has built five birdhouses (one looks like Miss Havisham's house; another, like a stained-glass garage), which she is installing in public places around Manhattan. For more information, call 925-3721. . . . ¶ The Lower East Side Garden Coalition is celebrating the day with a garden party, on Fifth Street between Avenues C and D. (April 22, from 11 to 5.) . . . ¶ At the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Girl Scouts will exchange old newspapers (bundled), bottles, and cans for houseplants. (April 22, from 12:30 to 3:45.) . . . ¶ There's a free concert on Central Park's Great Lawn, April 22, from 2 to 5. With the Roches, the B-52's, the "Saturday Night Live" band, and others.

Lingerie Retrospective—Twenty-seven mannequins will be clad in historic and avant-garde underwear. (La Rosa, a showroom at 22 W. 21st St. April 22-23, from 11 to 5.)

Readings—April 23 at 8: John Hollander and Edgar Bowers will read from their own poetry. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440.) . . . ¶ April 23 at 8: John Mortimer will read from his new novel, "Titmuss Regained"; Calvin Trillin will introduce. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. For information about tickets, call 645-5848.) . . . ¶ April 25 at 6:30: Charles Keating, Malachy McCourt, Dana Ivey, Cynthia Harris, and Rochelle Oliver will read short stories by David Lodge, Frank O'Connor, Annette Sanford, Veronica Geng, and Mark O'Donnell. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400.) . . . ¶ April 25 at 6:30: Galway Kinnell and Sharon Olds will read from their own poetry. (Vanderbilt Hall, New York University, 40 Washington Sq. S., at Macdougal St. 998-8816.)

Talk—April 19 at 6:30: Constantin Boym, Izhar Patkin, Ingrid Sischy, Nicholas Anestis, and Herbert Muschamp talk about the design of Chinese restaurants. (Parsons School of Design, 25 E. 13th St., 2nd fl. No tickets necessary.)

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25			

FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 26.

EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)
Theatre 1: "Bail Jumper" (directed by Christian Faber).
Theatre 2: "The Cook, the Thief, His Wife & Her Lover" (Peter Greenaway), with Richard Bohringer, Michael Gambon, Helen Mirren, and Alan Howard.
Theatre 3: "Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer" (†).
Theatre 4: "The Handmaid's Tale" (Volker Schlöndorff), with Natasha Richardson, Faye Dunaway, Robert Duvall, and Aidan Quinn.
Theatre 5: "Mystery Train" (Jim Jarmusch).
Theatre 6: "Drugstore Cowboy" (†).

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
Through April 19: The Documentary Festival of New York, featuring film, video, and made-for-television documentaries.
From April 20: "Mr. Hoover and I" (Emile de Antonio), a documentary. (Closed Sunday and Monday.)

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Nuns on the Run" (Jonathan Lynn), with Eric Idle and Robbie Coltrane.
Theatre 2: "I Love You to Death" (Lawrence Kasdan), with Kevin Kline, Tracey Ullman, and River Phoenix.
Theatre 3: Through April 19: "Impulse" (Sondra Locke), with Theresa Russell and Jeff Fahey. From April 20: "Body Chemistry."

Bijou Cinema, 3rd Ave. between 12th and 13th. (505-7320)
"The Hunt for Red October" (John McTiernan), with Sean Connery, Alec Baldwin, Scott Glenn, Sam Neill, James Earl Jones, and Richard Jordan.

Loews 19th Street East 6, B'way at 19th. (260-8000)
Theatre 1: "I Love You to Death" (Lawrence Kasdan), with Kevin Kline, Tracey Ullman, and River Phoenix.
Theatre 2: "A Shock to the System" (Jan Egleson), with Michael Caine, Swoosie Kurtz, and Peter Riegert.
Theatre 3: "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" (Steve Barron).
Theatre 4: Through April 19: "The First Power" (Robert Resnikoff), with Lou Diamond Phillips and Tracy Griffith. From April 20: "Miami Blues" (†).
Theatre 5: "Crazy People" (Tony Bill), with Dudley Moore and Daryl Hannah.
Theatre 6: "The Hunt for Red October" (John McTiernan), with Sean Connery and Alec Baldwin.

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"Pretty Woman" (†).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"The Gods Must Be Crazy II" (Jamie Uys).

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: Through April 19: "The First Power" (Robert Resnikoff), with Lou Diamond Phillips and Tracy Griffith. From April 20: "Miami Blues" (†).
Theatre 2: "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" (Steve Barron).
Theatre 3: "Crazy People" (Tony Bill), with Dudley Moore and Daryl Hannah.

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Vital Signs" (Marisa Silver), with Adrian Pasdar, Diane Lane, and Jimmy Smits.

Eastside Cinema, *3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)*
Through April 19: "Glory" (†).
From April 20: "Driving Miss Daisy" (†).

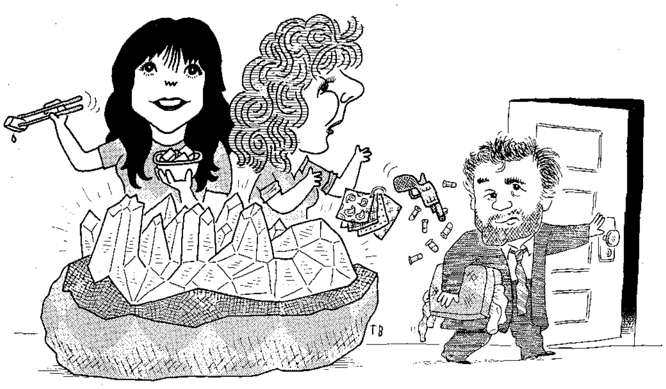
Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Vital Signs" (Marisa Silver), with Adrian Pasdar, Diane Lane, and Jimmy Smits.

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"The Cook, the Thief, His Wife & Her Lover" (Peter Greenaway), with Richard Bohringer, Michael Gambon, Helen Mirren, and Alan Howard.

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: Through April 19: "Bad Influence" (Curtis Hanson), with Rob Lowe, James Spader, and Lisa Zane. From April 20: "Miami Blues" (†).
Theatre 2: "Impulse" (Sondra Locke), with Theresa Russell and Jeff Fahey.

59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Crazy People" (Tony Bill), with Dudley Moore, Daryl Hannah, Paul Reiser, and Mercedes Ruehl.

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Cry-Baby" (†).
Theatre 2: "Nuns on the Run" (Jonathan Lynn), with Eric Idle and Robbie Coltrane.



"In the Spirit": Marlo Thomas, Elaine May, and Peter Falk

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: "Pretty Woman" (†).
Theatre 2: Through April 19: "My Left Foot" (†). From April 20: "Torn Apart" (Jack Fisher), with Adrian Pasdar and Cecilia Peck.
Theatre 3: Through April 19: "Sweetie" (Jane Campion). From April 20: "My Left Foot" (†).

Gemini 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "I Love You to Death" (Lawrence Kasdan), with Kevin Kline, Tracey Ullman, and River Phoenix.
Theatre 2: "A Shock to the System" (Jan Egleson), with Michael Caine, Swoosie Kurtz, and Peter Riegert.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"The Gods Must Be Crazy II" (Jamie Uys).

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "The Hunt for Red October" (John McTiernan), with Sean Connery, Alec Baldwin, Scott Glenn, Sam Neill, James Earl Jones, Joss Ackland, and Richard Jordan.
Theatre 2: "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" (Steve Barron).

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
Through April 19: "Driving Miss Daisy" (†).
From April 20: "Monsieur Hire" (Patrice Leconte; in French), with Michel Blanc and Sandrine Bonnaire.

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"In the Spirit" (Sandra Seacat), with Jeannie Berlin, Olympia Dukakis, Marlo Thomas, Elaine May, and Peter Falk.

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Crazy People" (Tony Bill), with Dudley Moore, Daryl Hannah, Paul Reiser, and Mercedes Ruehl.

Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)
Theatre 1: "The Hunt for Red October" (John McTiernan), with Sean Connery, Alec Baldwin, Scott Glenn, Sam Neill, James Earl Jones, Joss Ackland, and Richard Jordan.
Theatre 2: "Cry-Baby" (†).

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: Through April 19: "Impulse" (Sondra Locke), with Theresa Russell and Jeff Fahey. From April 20: "Miami Blues" (†).
Theatre 2: "Pretty Woman" (†).

WEST SIDE

Bleecker Street Cinema 1 and 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Theatre 1: "Sweetie" (directed by Jane Campion).
Theatre 2: (Separate admissions) "Macho Dancer" (Lino Brocka); and "Labyrinth of Passion" (1982, Pedro Almodóvar, in Spanish).

Waverly 1 and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "Crazy People" (Tony Bill), with Dudley Moore and Daryl Hannah.
Theatre 2: "Cry-Baby" (†).

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515)
"Pretty Woman" (†).

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" (Steve Barron).
Theatre 2: "The Gods Must Be Crazy II" (Jamie Uys).

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "My Left Foot" (†).
Theatre 2: "Camille Claudel" (†).
Theatre 3: "Henry V" (†).
Theatre 4: "Driving Miss Daisy" (†).

Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)
Theatre 1: "Vital Signs" (Marisa Silver), with Adrian Pasdar, Diane Lane, and Jimmy Smits.
Theatre 2: "Nuns on the Run" (Jonathan Lynn), with Eric Idle and Robbie Coltrane.
Theatre 3: "Cry-Baby" (†).
Theatre 4: "Bad Influence" (Curtis Hanson), with Rob Lowe, James Spader, and Lisa Zane.
Theatre 5: "The Cook, the Thief, His Wife & Her Lover" (Peter Greenaway), with Richard Bohringer, Michael Gambon, Helen Mirren, and Alan Howard.
Theatre 6: "The Gods Must Be Crazy II" (Jamie Uys).
Theatre 7: "Driving Miss Daisy" (†).
Theatre 8: "The Handmaid's Tale" (Volker Schlöndorff), with Natasha Richardson, Faye Dunaway, Robert Duvall, and Aidan Quinn.
Theatre 9: "My Left Foot" (†).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "Impulse" (Sondra Locke), with Theresa Russell and Jeff Fahey.
Theatre 2: "Angel Town" (Eric Karson), with Olivier Gruner and Theresa Saldana.
Theatre 3: Through April 19: (Separate admissions) "House Party" (Reginald Hudlin), with Christopher Reid and Christopher Martin; and "Ernest Goes to Jail" (John Cherry), with Jim Varney. From April 20: "Martians Go Home" (David Odell), with Randy Quaid.

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"Crazy People" (Tony Bill), with Dudley Moore and Daryl Hannah.

Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)
Theatre 1: "Driving Miss Daisy" (†).
Theatre 2: "Enemies, A Love Story" (†).
Theatre 3: Through April 19: "Bad Influence" (Curtis Hanson), with Rob Lowe, James Spader, and Lisa Zane. From April 20: "Martians Go Home" (David Odell), with Randy Quaid.
Theatre 4: "The Cook, the Thief, His Wife & Her Lover" (Peter Greenaway), with Richard Bohringer, Michael Gambon, Helen Mirren, and Alan Howard.
Theatre 5: "Nuns on the Run" (Jonathan Lynn), with Eric Idle and Robbie Coltrane.
Theatre 6: "Cry-Baby" (†).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
Through April 19: "Mountains of the Moon" (†).
From April 20: "Chattahoochee" (Mick Jackson), with Gary Oldman and Dennis Hopper.

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
"Henry V" (†).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"A Shock to the System" (Jan Egleson), with Michael Caine, Swoosie Kurtz, Peter

Riegert, Elizabeth McGovern, Will Patton, Jenny Wright, and John McMartin.

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
"The Gods Must Be Crazy II" (Jamie Uys).

Carnegie Screening Room, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (757-2131)
"Camille Claudel" (†).

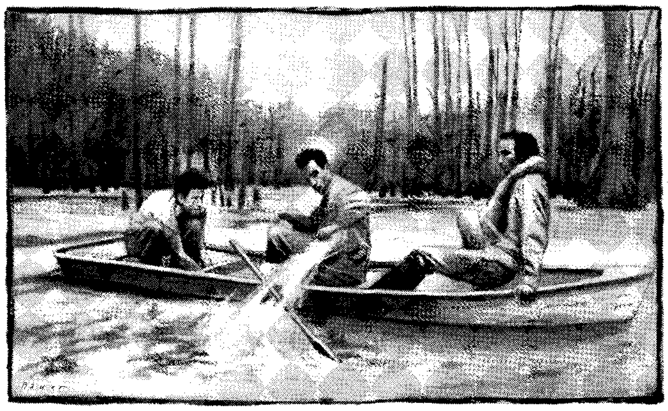
Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"Mama, There's a Man in Your Bed" (Coline Serreau; in French), with Daniel Auteuil and Firmine Richard.

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Driving Miss Daisy" (†).

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
Through April 19: "In the Spirit" (Sandra Seacat), with Jeannie Berlin, Marlo Thomas, Elaine May, and Peter Falk.
From April 20: "Miami Blues" (†).

62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)
"Cry-Baby" (†).

Lincoln Plaza 1, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "My Left Foot" (†).
Theatre 2: "Cinema Paradiso" (Giuseppe Tornatore; in Italian), with Philippe Noiret, Salvatore Cascio, and Jacques Perrin.
Theatre 3: "Too Beautiful for You" (Bertrand Blier; in French), with Gérard Depardieu, Josiane Balasko, and Carole Bouquet.



"Down by Law": Tom Waits, John Lurie, and Roberto Benigni

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"Nuns on the Run" (Jonathan Lynn), with Eric Idle and Robbie Coltrane.

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" (Steve Barron).
Theatre 2: "The Hunt for Red October" (John McTiernan), with Sean Connery, Alec Baldwin, Scott Glenn, Sam Neill, James Earl Jones, Joss Ackland, and Richard Jordan.
Theatre 3: "Pretty Woman" (†).
Theatre 4: "Driving Miss Daisy" (†).
Theatre 5: "Crazy People" (Tony Bill), with Dudley Moore and Daryl Hannah.
Theatre 6: Through April 19: "The First Power" (Robert Resnikoff), with Lou Diamond Phillips and Tracy Griffith. From April 20: "Miami Blues" (†).

Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: "I Love You to Death" (Lawrence Kasdan), with Kevin Kline, Tracey Ullman, and River Phoenix.
Theatre 2: "The Cook, the Thief, His Wife & Her Lover" (Peter Greenaway), with Richard Bohringer, Michael Gambon, Helen Mirren, and Alan Howard.

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: Through April 19: "Impulse" (Sondra Locke), with Theresa Russell and Jeff Fahey. From April 20: "Martians Go Home" (David Odell), with Randy Quaid.
Theatre 2: "Vital Signs" (Marisa Silver), with Adrian Pasdar, Diane Lane, and Jimmy Smits.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "House Party" (directed by Reginald Hudlin), with Christopher Reid and Christopher Martin.
Theatre 2: "I Love You to Death" (Lawrence Kasdan), with Kevin Kline, Tracey Ullman, and River Phoenix.
Theatre 3: "Vital Signs" (Marisa Silver), with Adrian Pasdar, Diane Lane, and Jimmy Smits.
Theatre 4: "Angel Town" (Eric Karson), with Olivier Gruner and Theresa Saldana.
Theatre 5: "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" (Steve Barron).
Theatre 6: Through April 19: "Angel Town." From April 20: "Body Chemistry."

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)
"Pretty Woman" (†).

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 2: "Crazy People" (Tony Bill), with Dudley Moore and Daryl Hannah.
Theatre 3: "The First Power" (Robert Resnikoff), with Lou Diamond Phillips and Tracy Griffith.
Theatre 4: "Ernest Goes to Jail" (John Cherry), with Jim Varney.

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
"The Hunt for Red October" (John McTiernan), with Sean Connery, Alec Baldwin, Scott Glenn, Sam Neill, James Earl Jones, Joss Ackland, and Richard Jordan.

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: "Cry-Baby" (†).
Theatre 2: Through April 19: "Bad Influence" (Curtis Hanson), with Rob Lowe, James Spader, and Lisa Zane. From April 20: "Martians Go Home" (David Odell), with Randy Quaid.

Warner, 7th Ave. between 42nd and 43rd. (764-6760)
"Blue Steel" (Kathryn Bigelow), with Jamie Lee Curtis and Ron Silver.

West Side Cinema 1 and 2, 7th Ave. at 48th. (398-1720)
Theatre 1: "Hard to Kill" (Bruce Malmuth), with Steven Seagal.
Theatre 2: "Impulse" (Sondra Locke), with Theresa Russell and Jeff Fahey.

REVIVAL HOUSES

Biograph Cinema, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
April 16: "California Suite" (1978, directed by Herbert Ross), with Alan Alda, Jane Fonda, Richard Pryor, Bill Cosby, Walter Matthau, Elaine May, Michael Caine, and Maggie Smith; and "Hot Millions" (1968, Eric Till), with Peter Ustinov and Smith.
April 17-18: "Love and Pain and the Whole Damn Thing" (1973, Alan J. Pakula), with Maggie Smith and Timothy Bottoms; and "The Pumpkin Eater" (1964, Jack Clayton), with Anne Bancroft, Peter Finch, James Mason, and Smith.
April 19: "The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne" (†); and "Lily in Love" (1985, Karoly Makk), with Christopher Plummer and Maggie Smith.
April 20-21: "Othello" (1975, Stuart Burge), with Laurence Olivier, Frank Finlay, and Maggie Smith.
April 22-23: "The V.I.P.s" (1963, Terence Rattigan), with Elizabeth Taylor, Richard Burton, Maggie Smith, Orson Welles, Margaret Rutherford, Linda Christian, and Louis Jourdan; and "Murder by Death" (1976, Robert Moore), with Eileen Brennan, Truman Capote, James Coco, Peter Falk, Alec Guinness, Elsa Lanchester, David Niven, Peter Sellers, Smith, Nancy Walker, and Estelle Winwood.
April 24-25: "Nowhere to Go" (1959, Seth Holt), with George Nader, Bernard Lee, and Maggie Smith; and "Agatha" (†).

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through April 17: "Choose Me" (1984, Alan Rudolph), with Keith Carradine, Geneviève Bujold, and Lesley Ann Warren; and "Bagdad Café" (1988, Percy Adlon), with Marianne Sägebrecht and CCH Pounder.
April 18-19: "Family Business" (1989, Sidney Lumet), with Sean Connery, Dustin Hoffman, and Matthew Broderick; and "The Offence" (1973, Lumet), with Connery, Trevor Howard, and Ian Bannen.
April 20-21: "Let's Get Lost" (1988, Bruce Weber), a documentary about Chet Baker; and "Down by Law" (†).
April 22: "Siddhartha" (1973, Conrad Rooks), with Shashi Kapoor; and "Forest of Bliss" (1985, Robert Gardner).
April 23-24: "Chimes at Midnight" (†); and "The Trial" (1962, Orson Welles), with Anthony Perkins, Jeanne Moreau, Suzanne Flon, Elsa Martinelli, Romy Schneider, and Welles.
From April 25: "Triumph of the Spirit" (1989, Robert M. Young), with Willem Dafoe, Edward James Olmos, and Robert Loggia; and "Daniel" (†).

Thalia SoHo, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)
Through April 17: "Wait Until Dark" (1967, Terence Young), with Audrey Hepburn, Alan Arkin, and Richard Crenna; and "Roman Holiday" (1953, William Wyler), with Hepburn, Gregory Peck, and Eddie Albert.
April 18-19: "Badlands" (1973, Terrence Malick), with Martin Sheen and Sissy Spacek; and "The Stepfather" (1987, Joseph Ruben), with Terry O'Quinn, Jill Schoelen, and Shelley Hack.
April 20-21: "The Godfather" (1972, Francis Ford Coppola), with Marlon Brando and Al Pacino; and "The Godfather, Part II" (1974, Coppola), with Pacino, Robert Duvall, Diane Keaton, and Robert De Niro.
April 22: "La Dolce Vita" (1960, Federico Fellini; in Italian), with Marcello Mastroianni and Anita Ekberg.
April 23-24: "The Adventures of Baron Munchausen" (†); and "Monty Python and the Holy Grail" (1975, Terry Gilliam and Terry Jones), with Graham Chapman.
From April 25: "A Clockwork Orange" (1971, Stanley Kubrick), with Malcolm McDowell, Patrick Magee, and Adrienne Corri; and "Full Metal Jacket" (†).

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
April 16: "Le Jour se Lève" ("Daybreak"; 1939, Marcel Carné; in French), with Jean Gabin, Jules Berry, and Arletty; and "Bizarre, Bizarre" (1937, Carné; in French), with Louis Jouvet, Françoise Rosay, Jean-Louis Barrault, Michel Simon, and Jean-Pierre Aumont.
April 17: "Women in Love" (1970, Ken Russell), with Alan Bates, Oliver Reed, Glenda Jackson, and Jennie Linden; and "Sons and Lovers" (1960, Jack Cardiff), with Trevor Howard, Dean Stockwell, Wendy Hiller, Mary Ure, and Heather Sears.
April 18: "Dr. No" (1963) and "Thunderball" (1965), both directed by Terence Young, with Sean Connery as James Bond.
April 19: "Suddenly, Last Summer" (1959, Joseph L. Mankiewicz), with Elizabeth Taylor, Montgomery Clift, and Katharine Hepburn; and "Holiday" (†).
April 20-21: "Walkabout" (1971, Nicolas Roeg); and "Picnic at Hanging Rock" (1975, Peter Weir), with Rachel Roberts and Dominic Guard.
April 22: "The Lady from Shanghai" (1948, Orson Welles), with Rita Hayworth, Everett Sloane, and Welles; and "Gilda" (1946, Charles Vidor), with Hayworth, Glenn Ford, and George Macready.
April 23: "Smiles of a Summer Night" (1955, Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Ulla Jacobsson, Eva Dahlbeck, Gunnar Björnstrand, Jarl Kulle, and Harriet Andersson; and "The Magic Flute" (†).
April 24: "Shadow of the Thin Man" (†); and "Song of the Thin Man" (1947, Edward Buzzell), with Myrna Loy and William Powell.
April 25: "And Then There Were None" (1945, René Clair), with Barry Fitzgerald, Walter Huston, and Louis Hayward; and "Dead of Night" (1945), a five-part English film about the supernatural.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490)
Theatre 1: April 16 at 2:30: "State of Siege" (1973, directed by Costa-Gavras; in French), with Yves Montand, Renato Salvatori, and O. E. Hasse. . . . ¶ April 16 at 6: "Special Section" (1975, Costa-Gavras; in French), with Michel Lonsdale, Heinz Bennent, and Michel Galabru. . . . ¶ April 17 at 2:30: "The Confession" (1970, Costa-Gavras; in French), with Montand and Simone Signoret. . . . ¶ April 17 at 6: "One Man Too Many" (1967, Costa-Gavras; in French), with Jean-Claude Brialy, Bruno Cremer, and Jacques Perrin. . . . ¶ April 19 at 2:30: "Missing" (1982, Costa-Gavras), with Jack Lemmon, Sissy Spacek, and John Shea. . . . ¶ April 19 at 6: "Family Business" (1986, Costa-Gavras; in French), with Johnny Hallyday, Fanny Ardant, and Guy Marchand. . . . ¶ April 20 at 2:30: "Music Box" (1989, Costa-Gavras), with Jessica Lange, Armin Mueller-Stahl,

MOVIE HOUSES—Cont'd

and Frederic Forrest. . . . ¶ April 20 at 6: "The Confession." . . . ¶ April 21 at 2: "Hanna K." (1983, Costa-Gavras), with Jill Clayburgh, Jeanne Yanne, and Gabriel Byrne. . . . ¶ April 21 at 5: "Missing." . . . ¶ April 22 at 2: "One Man Too Many." . . . ¶ April 22 at 5: "Clair de Femme" (1979, Costa-Gavras; in French), with Montand, Romy Schneider, and Lila Kedrova. . . . ¶ April 23 at 2:30: "Hanna K." . . . ¶ April 23 at 6: "Betrayed" (1988, Costa-Gavras), with Debra Winger, Tom Berenger, and John Heard. . . . ¶ April 24 at 2:30: "Family Business." . . . ¶ April 24 at 6: "Music Box."

THEATRE 2: April 17 at 3: "Salvador" (1986, Oliver Stone), with James Woods, James Belushi, and Michael Murphy. . . . ¶ April 17 at 6: "Under Fire" (1983, Roger Spottiswoode), with Nick Nolte, Gene Hackman, and Joanna Cassidy. . . . ¶ April 23 at 6:30: A program of hand-painted 16-mm. and 35-mm. films (1980-90) by Stan Brakhage, who will be present. . . . ¶ April 24 at 3: "Funny Face" (1957, Stanley Donen), with Audrey Hepburn, Fred Astaire, and Kay Thompson. . . . ¶ April 24 at 6: "An Affair of the Skin" ("Love as Disorder"; 1963, Ben Maddow), with Diana Sands, Kevin McCarthy, and Viveca Lindfors.

MUSEUM OF BROADCASTING, 1 E. 53rd St. (752-7684)—"Laurence Olivier: The Television Legacy." April 17-18: "The Collection" (1976, Michael Apted), with Olivier, Alan Bates, Malcolm McDowell, and Helen Mirren. . . . April 19-21: "Daphne Laureola" (1978, Waris Hussein), with Olivier, Joan Plowright, Gregoire Aslan, and Clive Arrindell. . . . From April 24: "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof" (1976, Robert Moore), with Olivier, Mildred Dunnock, Robert Wagner, and Natalie Wood. Showings Tuesdays at 3 and 6, Wednesdays through Fridays at 3, and Saturdays at 1. . . . ¶ "The Reiner Moritz Collection." April 17-21: "Sir Georg Solti" (1987, Alan Benson), a documentary. Showings Tuesday at 2 and 6:30 and Wednesday through Saturday at 2. . . . April 17-21: "Mstislav Rostropovich" (1984, Don Featherstone), a documentary. Showings Tuesday through Saturday at 3:15. . . . From April 24: "Wozzeck" (1987, Brian Large). Showings Tuesday through Saturday at 2.

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)—In the Riklis Theatre, films on which William Cameron Menzies was either the production designer or the director. April 18 at 2:30: "Conquest of the Air" (1935, Zoltán Korda and John Monk), with Laurence Olivier. . . . ¶ April 19 at 2:30: "For Whom the Bell Tolls" (1943, Sam Wood), with Gary Cooper and Ingrid Bergman. . . . ¶ April 20 at 2:30: "Reaching for the Moon" (1931, Edmund Goulding), with Douglas Fairbanks and Bebe Daniels. . . . ¶ April 21 at 2: "The Bat" (1926, Roland West; silent), with André de Beranger and Charles Herzinger. . . . ¶ April 21 at 5: "The Iron Mask" (1929, Allan Dwan; silent), with Fairbanks. . . . ¶ April 22 at 2 and April 25 at 2:30: "Puttin' on the Ritz" (1930, E. H. Sloman), with Harry Richman and Joan Bennett.

ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES, 32-34 Second Ave., at Second St. (477-2714)—Films showing in either the Jonas Mekas Theatre or the Maya Deren Theatre. April 18 at 7: "Old and New" (1929, Sergei Eisenstein; silent). . . . ¶ April 18 at 9: "October" (1982, Eisenstein; silent). . . . ¶ April 19 at 7: "Greasepaint and Gasoline" (1931, Jindřich Honzl; in Czech). . . . ¶ April 19-20 at 9, April 21 at 10:30, and April 22 at 9: "Twister" (1988, Michael Almereyda), with Harry Dean Stanton, Lois Chiles, Suzy Amis, Dylan McDermott, and Crispin Glover. . . . ¶ April 20 at 7: "Your Money or Your Life" (1932, Honzl; in Czech). . . . ¶ April 21 at 5:30: "Crisis" (1938, Herbert Kline; in Czech). . . . ¶ April 21 at 7: "The World Belongs to Us" (1937, Martin Frič; in Czech). . . . ¶ April 21 at 9: "Tonka of the Gallows" (1930, Karel Anton; in Czech). . . . ¶ April 22 at 5:30: "Flashback and Dreams: Five Films 1933-34," short Czech films. . . . ¶ April 22 at 7: "Heave Ho!" (1934, Frič; in Czech). . . . ¶ April 25 at 7: "Ivan the Terrible, Parts I and II" (1944-46, Eisenstein; in Russian).

FLORENCE GOULD HALL, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—April 18 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "Topaze" (1933, Louis Gasnier; in French), with Louis Jouvet, Pierre Larquey, and Edwige Feuillère. . . . ¶ April 25 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "The Little Thief" (1988, Claude Miller; in French), with Charlotte Gainsbourg, Simon de la Brosse, Clotilde de Bayser, and Raoul Billery.

JAPAN SOCIETY, 333 E. 47th St. (752-3015)—April 20 at 6:30: "The Build-Up" (1958, Yasuzo Masumura; in Japanese), with Hiroshi Kawaguchi.

ASIA SOCIETY, Park Ave. at 70th St. (517-2742)—Films directed by Tsui Hark, in Cantonese, with English and Mandarin subtitles. April 20 at 6:30: "Love and Death in Saigon." . . . ¶ April 20 at 8:30: "The Butterfly Murders." . . . ¶ April 22 at 5: "All the Wrong Clues." . . . ¶ April 22 at 7: "Peking Opera Blues."

ADAM CLAYTON POWELL, JR., STATE OFFICE BUILDING, 163 W. 125th St. (873-5040)—April 20 at 1 and 4:40: "The Battle of Algiers" (1966, Gillo Pontecorvo), with Brahim Haggiag; and "The Spook Who Sat by the Door" (1973, Ivan Dixon), with Lawrence Cooke, Paula Kelly, and Janet League. . . . ¶ April 20 at 7: "The Spook Who Sat by the Door"; and "The Color of Love" ("Lord Chango"; 1974, Ray Marsh), with Cooke. . . . ¶ April 21 at 1: "Three the Hard Way" (1974, Gordon Parks, Jr.), with Jim Brown, Fred Williamson, and Jim Kelly; "Sweet Sweetback's Baadasssss Song" (1973, Melvin Van Peebles), with Melvin Van Peebles, Mario Van Peebles, and John Amos; and "Shaft" (1971, Gordon Parks), with Richard Roundtree and Moses Gunn. . . . ¶ April 21 at 6:30: "Sophisticated Ladies" (1982, Clark Jones) and "Treemonisha" (1982, Sid Smith). . . . ¶ April 22 at 1 and 3:40: "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings" (1978, Fielder Cook), with Esther Rolle, Diahann Carroll, Paul Benjamin, Madge St. Clair, Roger Mosley, and Ruby Dee; and "Fields of Endless Day" (1978, Terence McCarthey-Filgate), with Lili Clark, Winston Sutton, and Ricardo Keens-Douglas. . . . ¶ April 22 at 6: "She's Gotta Have It" (1986, Spike Lee), with Tracy Camilia John, Tommie Hicks, John Canada Terrell, and Lee; "Joe's Bed-Stuy Barbershop: We Cut Heads" (1983, Lee); and "Making 'Do the Right Thing'" (1989, St. Claire Bourne), a documentary.

AVERY FISHER HALL, Lincoln Center—A tribute to James Stewart. (April 23, at 7.)

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.

IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael and Terrence Rafferty.)

THE ADVENTURES OF BARON MUNCHAUSEN (1989)—The Baron, who lived from 1720 to 1797, was a fibber of genius—a fabulist. Terry Gilliam, who directed this special-effects extravaganza, sees his theme as the liar as artist; his Munchausen (John Neville) is a poet, a man of imagination. He's pitted against the practical men who believe in facts and compromise and conformity (i.e., the men who finance movies). The elements are here for a fantasy on the order of "The Wizard of Oz" and "Pinocchio" and the 1940 "Thief of Bagdad"; the Baron and the ten-year-old girl (Sarah Polley) who accompanies him voyage to a city on the moon, fall into the fire god Vulcan's foundry inside the belching Mt. Etna, and are swallowed by a monster fish. Yet the picture is dry and choppy and remote. The design (by Dante Ferretti) and the cinematography (by Giuseppe Rotunno) are sometimes magnificent, and there are scenes that are near-inspired. Something is missing, though: a bit of conviction—of ardor and awe. Gilliam's hip silliness is deflating; his gifts—his gagster's prankishness and his sense of beauty—don't harmonize. The picture is almost devoid of emotional shadings. With Oliver Reed, who's a great rampaging Vulcan, Robin Williams (uncredited) as the King of the Moon, Uma Thurman as Venus, and Eric Idle, Jonathan Pryce, Sting, Valentina Cortese, Bill Paterson, Alison Steadman, and Charles McKeown, who co-wrote the script with Gilliam.—P.K. (Reviewed in our issue of 4/3/89) (Thalia SoHo; April 23-24.)

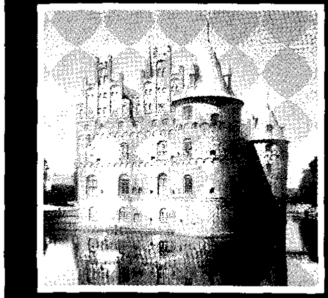
AGATHA (1979)—Vanessa Redgrave has a luminously loony quality as the distraught heroine of this fictional romantic mystery, which purports to be about the eleven days in 1926 when Agatha Christie, whose husband wanted a divorce so he could marry his mistress, took off for a Yorkshire spa, where she used the mistress's name. Dustin Hoffman is furiously theatrical in the role of a preening star journalist from America who trails Agatha to the spa and falls in love with her. There is a blissful romantic moment when the goddess-tall, swan-necked Agatha responds to the journalist's (previously denied) request for a kiss by coiling over and down to reach him. The movie has a general air of knowingness, and some of the incidental dialogue is clever, though it doesn't seem to have a story—with its lulling tempo and languid elegance, it seems to be from a musing. The talent of the director, Michael Apted, is for the tactile, the plangent, the indefinite; when the action dawdles, he lets the cinematographer, Vittorio Storaro, take over. The rooms look smoked, and everything is in soft movement; this is the rare movie that is too fluid. Yet there's a gentle pull to it, and Redgrave endows Agatha Christie with the oddness of genius. With Timothy Dalton, who gives a strong, funny performance as the husband exhausted by his wife's high-powered sensitivity, and the curly-mouthed Helen Morse as the friendly woman Agatha meets at the spa. The script is credited to Kathleen Tynan, who initiated the project, and Arthur Hopcraft; additional writers were also involved.—P.K. (Biograph Cinema; April 24-25.)

CAMILLE CLAUDEL—She lived, she loved, she sculpted, she went nuts. Bruno Nuytten's first film is a de-luxe biography of a nearly forgotten (but attractive!) artist who studied with the great Rodin, became his assistant and lover, and then struggled to break free of his influence and discover her own identity as a sculptor. Willful (and comely) as she is, Camille never manages to shake her obsession with Rodin, and she makes a mess of her life and her career. This is rich material, but the movie is a real chore to sit through: it's two and a half hours long, and the pace is sluggish. Nuytten, a superb cinematographer, doesn't seem to know how to tell a story—not one as complex as this, anyway. Isabelle Adjani plays Camille (there are obvious similarities to her role in "The Story of Adèle H.") with terrific abandon and intensity, yet the performance isn't satisfying; the film is so poorly shaped as drama that even her most striking moments seem to come out of nowhere. Also with Gérard Depardieu as Rodin, Laurent Grevill as Paul Claudel (Camille's younger brother, who became a well-known writer), and Alain Cuny. The script, by Nuytten and Marilyn Goldin, is based on a biography by Reine-Marie Paris. In French.—T.R. (Quad Cinema, and Carnegie Screening Room.)

CHIMES AT MIDNIGHT (1967; "Falstaff")—One of Orson Welles' best and least-seen movies. It is damaged by technical problems resulting from lack of funds, and during the first twenty minutes viewers may want to walk out, because although Shakespeare's words on the soundtrack are intelligible, the sound doesn't match the images, and often we can't be sure who is supposed to be talking. But then, despite everything—the use of doubles in long shots, the editing that distracts us when we need to concentrate on the dialogue—the movie begins to be great. Welles brought together the pieces of Falstaff that Shakespeare had strewn over the two parts of "Henry IV" and "The Merry Wives of Windsor," with cuttings from "Henry V" and "Richard II," and fastened them into place with narration from Holinshed's "Chronicles" (read by Ralph Richardson). Those of us who resisted our teachers' best efforts to make us appreciate the comic genius of Shakespeare's fools and buffoons will not be surprised that Welles wasn't able to make Falstaff very funny; he's a great conception of a character, but the charades and practical jokes and the carousing and roistering seem meant to be funnier than they are. The movie does have a great Shakespearean comic moment, though: garrulous Falstaff sitting with Shallow (Alan Webb) and Silence (Walter Chiari), rolling his eyes in irritation and impatience at Silence's stammer. Though Welles' performance as Falstaff is short on comedy, it's very rich, very full. Oddly, we never really see the friendship of Falstaff and Prince Hal—played extraordinarily well by Keith Baxter—but John Gielgud's refined, monkish Henry IV gives the film the austerity it needs for the conflict within Hal to be dramatized. The film is a near masterpiece. Welles' direction of the battle of Shrewsbury is unlike anything else he ever did—indeed, unlike any battle ever done on the screen before. It ranks with the finest of Griffith, John Ford, Eisenstein, Kurosawa. The compositions suggest Uccello, and the chilling, ironic music is a death knell for all men in battle. The soldiers, plastered by the mud they fall in, are already monuments. It's the most brutally sombre battle ever filmed, and it does justice to Hotspur's great "O, Harry, thou hast robbed me of my youth." With Margaret Rutherford, Jeanne Moreau, Marina Vlady, Norman Rodway, Fernando Rey, Tony Beckley, and Beatrice Welles as the page boy. Shot on Spanish locations.—P.K. (Cinema Village; April 23-24.)

Cry-Baby—John Waters' new movie, set in Baltimore in 1954, is an attempt to repeat the formula of his "Hairspray" (1988), but this is a much less enjoyable picture. Like all Waters movies, it's about a battle between the good, disreputable people and the bad, conventional ones—in this case, a group of juvenile delinquents (called "drapes"), whose leader is a handsome rock and roller known as Cry-Baby (Johnny Depp), versus "the squares," represented by just about everybody else in town. Cry-Baby, a sensitive sort (he lost both his parents to the electric chair), falls in love with a square girl, Allison (Amy Locane), and the film devotes itself to exploring the question, Can their forbidden love survive in a world that just doesn't understand? (Can't the adults see that these mixed-up kids are the cutest people alive?) Unfortunately, almost everything in the movie feels flat and enervated. It's indifferently, mechanically paced; the musical numbers are ineptly staged; and Depp isn't a very exciting presence. Waters seems to be going through the motions: "Cry-Baby" is all attitude, a rote recitation of mildly naughty jokes he's made before. Maybe cute people don't inspire him. The bizarre supporting cast includes Polly Bergen, former porn queen Traci Lords, Kim McGuire (as a spectacularly ugly girl called Hatchet-Face), Susan Tyrrell, Ricki Lake, Iggy Pop, Troy Donahue, Joey Heatherton, Joe Dallesandro, David Nelson, and celebrity ex-con Patty Hearst. The star of Waters' previous films, the massive transvestite Divine, died just after the release of "Hairspray," and in his absence the bad-taste touches are sourer than usual; in this picture we feel there's something a little masochistic about Waters' fascination with the grotesque.—T.R. (4/9/90) (Baronet, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Waverly, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, 62nd & Broadway, and National Twin.)

Daniel (1983)—Sidney Lumet directed, from E. L. Doctorow's script, based on his 1971 novel "The Book of Daniel." The quasi-modernist novel is a personal fantasy that plugs into the persecution fears that the Rosenberg case stirred up. Doctorow went right for the torn, bleeding heart of the matter: the emotions of the two young children orphaned by the electric chair. It's a mussy, mixed-up, passionate book—demagogic and harrowing. The movie is all those things, too, except it's not passionate, and so it doesn't carry you along. When Lumet gets into one of his chronicles of agonized morality, it seems as if his normally high energy level sinks, and the melodramatic materials he's working with thicken and become clotted. The action here jumps back and forth among four decades shot in slightly different color ranges, and nothing takes hold now or then or in between. Timothy Hutton is Daniel, the son of the "Isaacsons," who is searching for the meaning of his dead parents' lives, and Amanda Plummer is his driven-mad younger sister; Lindsay Crouse and Mandy Patinkin are the parents. The cast includes Ellen Barkin, Ed Asner, Carmen Matthews, John Rubinstein, Maria Tucci, Julie Bovasso, Tovah Feldshuh,



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Garrison Keillor

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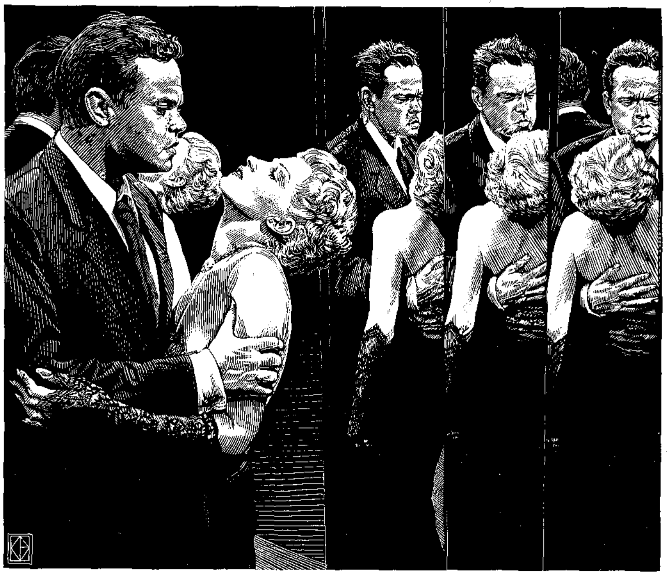
Rita Hayworth was one love goddess who didn't have to be put on a pedestal. In the 1946 film noir "Gilda" (playing April 22 at Theatre 80 St. Marks), she has plenty of self-depreciating good humor—she enjoys being a dame. This fluky film is a baroque betrayal-and-revenge saga that becomes the perfect setting for Hayworth's ripe, playful sensuality.

George Macready is a Buenos Aires casino owner who carries a knife hidden in the tip of his cane; Glenn Ford is the right-hand man who knows the left side of the law. All's well until Macready goes on a business trip and returns with his new wife, Gilda—Ford's ex-girlfriend. Ford says he was happier when "the three of us" referred to him, Macready, and the retractable knife. The knife symbolizes just what you think it does. At one point, Hayworth even invokes Freud.

Ford is effectively slimy as a weirdly self-loathing wise guy, Macready is a fascistic big shot (he's partnered with Nazis in a tungsten cartel), and Hayworth revels in toying with the affections of both of them. When Hayworth sheds a glove while performing "Put the Blame on Mame" (dubbed by Anita Ellis), it has more impact than if she had stripped down to a G-string. Ford and Macready are such a sick duo that you can't help thinking her flagrant teasing is for their own good.

Hayworth is nearly as memorable in the title role of the 1948 film noir "The Lady from Shanghai" (also playing April 22 at Theatre 80 St. Marks), written and directed by, and co-starring, Orson Welles. He undermines his own movie with an unbelievable brogue in his pouty performance as an idealized tough Irishman. But Everett Sloane is an entertainingly outré villain—a two-legged tarantula on crutches—and there are several bold, flashy set pieces in San Francisco, including a chase through a Chinatown theatre, a love scene at the aquarium in Golden Gate Park, and a fun-house shootout. And Hayworth, her hair colored platinum, reveals an exciting sadistic streak underneath her bathing-beauty allure. There's a stiletto hidden in the cheesecake.



Orson Welles and Rita Hayworth in "The Lady from Shanghai"

and many other well-known players; some of them must have flinched when they saw their performances here. Paul Robeson's voice rolls across the soundtrack during perhaps half a dozen sequences.—P.K. (Cinema Village; starting April 25.)

Down by Law (1986)—Jim Jarmusch's follow-up to his 1984 "Stranger Than Paradise" is also a low-key minimalist comedy about American anomie shot in black-and-white—this time by Robby Müller. The setting is New Orleans, where two deadbeats—Jack, an ineffectual pimp (John Lurie), and Zack, an itinerant disk jockey (Tom Waits)—become the victims of frameups and are put in the same prison cell, where they vegetate in hostile silence. And the moviemaking itself shares in their lethargy; that's what gives the film a cachet of modernism. Everything changes when a little, life-loving Italian, Roberto (Roberto Benigni), is put in with them; the three become pals, grinning and talking together. And, eventually, Roberto devises an escape plan. Jarmusch's passive style has its wit, but the style is deadening here until he brings in Roberto—a character out of folk humor. And without the boredom of the first three-quarters of an hour Roberto wouldn't be so funny. The best scene in the movie is the least characteristic of Jarmusch: it comes almost at the start, when Ellen Barkin, as Zack's girlfriend, throws a tantrum, quiets down, then gets sore again, and—wham-wham-wham!—his possessions land in the street. That's the most active the movie ever gets. The music is by Lurie, the songs are by Waits.—P.K. (Cinema Village; April 20-21.)

Driving Miss Daisy—Alfred Uhry's adaptation of his much honored play is still full of manipulative bits—it's virtually all manipulative bits—but the director, Bruce Beresford, understands how to work them while cutting down on their obviousness. Set in Atlanta, starting in 1948, the movie is the story of the companionship that develops between stubborn, suspicious Miss Daisy (Jessica Tandy), a wealthy Jewish widow of seventy-two, and her resilient chauffeur, Hoke (Morgan Freeman), a widower about a decade younger than she is. Essentially, it's about how he changes her. He's made upright, considerate, humane—he's made perfect—so that nothing will disturb our appreciation of the gentle, bittersweet reverie we're watching. But it's acted (and directed) eloquently. Tandy and Freeman achieve a beautiful equilibrium. And Dan Aykroyd comes through with a fine performance as Miss Daisy's good-old-boy son.—P.K. (12/25/89) (Quad Cinema, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, Cinema 3, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex. . . . ¶ 68th St. Playhouse; through April 19. . . . ¶ Eastside Cinema; starting April 20.)

Drugstore Cowboy—Nihilistic humor rarely bubbles up in a movie as freely as it does here. Set in Portland, Oregon, in 1971, the story is about two couples who live together and travel around the Pacific Northwest robbing hospitals and pharmacies, grabbing fistfuls of pills and capsules. They're like a junkie version of Clyde Barrow's gang. The director, Gus Van Sant, takes us inside a lot of underground attitudes: the druggies are monomaniacal about leading an aimless existence—they see themselves as romantic figures. They're comic, but they're not put down for being comic. The picture keeps you laughing because it's so nonjudgmental. Van Sant is half in and half out of the desire of adolescents to remain kids forever. As the gang's twenty-six-year-old leader, Matt Dillon brings the role a light self-mockery that helps set the tone of the film, and Kelly Lynch is strikingly effective as the leader's wife. Also with James Le Gros, Heather Graham, James Remar, Max Perlich, Beah Richards, Grace Zabriskie, and William Burroughs. The script, by the director and Daniel Yost, was based on an unpublished novel by James Fogle, who's in prison for drug-related robberies.—P.K. (10/30/89) (Angelika Film Center.)

Enemies, A Love Story—Emotionally overwhelming. Adapted from Isaac Bashevis Singer's New York City novel, set in 1949—a post-Holocaust sex farce in which three passionately jealous women are in love with a guilt-ridden, self-effacing man. The director, Paul Mazursky, has gathered a superbly balanced cast and kept the action so smooth that the viewer is carried along on a tide of mystical slyness. Ron Silver is the Polish-Jewish intellectual who survived the Final Solution by hiding in a hayloft. Margaret Sophie Stein is the Gentile peasant (now his wife) who risked her life to take care of him. Lena Olin is his diabolically willful mistress, a survivor of the camps. Anjelica Huston is the wife (with an erotic aura) he thought was killed by the Nazis. This richly satisfying movie is restrained, yet it has its own deeply crazy turmoil. Mazursky pulls the rug out from under us, and we drop through the farce. With Alan King, Judith Malina, Phil Leeds, and Mazursky. The script is by Roger L. Simon and the director. —P.K. (12/25/89) (Worldwide Cinemas.)

Full Metal Jacket (1987)—Stanley Kubrick's Vietnam film stays reasonably close to its source, Gustav Hasford's compressed, white-hot novel "The Short-Timers," yet the novel has an accumulating force of horror and the movie doesn't. The first three-quarters of an hour is basic training in the Marines stripped down to a cartoonish horrorshow; it's military S & M, and the pounding compulsiveness can easily be taken for the work of a master director. After that, the movie becomes dispersed, and you can't get an emotional reading on it. Kubrick probably believes he's numbing us by the power of his vision, but he's actually numbing us by its emptiness. Here's a director who has been insulated from American life for more than two decades, and he proceeds to define the American crisis of the century. He does it by lingering for a near-pornographic eternity over a young Vietnamese woman who is in pain and pleads "Shoot me! Shoot me!" This is James M. Cain in Vietnam. The script is by Kubrick, Michael Herr, and Hasford. Shot in England. With Matthew Modine as Private Joker, who wears a peace symbol; Vincent D'Onofrio as poor, doughy-faced Pyle; Lee Ermey as the gunnery sergeant; and Arliss Howard, Dorian Harewood, and Adam Baldwin.—P.K. (Thalia SoHo; starting April 25.)

Glory—This Civil War epic, based on fiery, spirit-stirring material that has never before been tapped for the movies, is emotionally moving even when the scenes falter. The 54th Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry was the first black fighting unit to be formed in the North, and the white colonel in command of the effort to prove that black men had the discipline and valor to stand up against the enemy was Robert Gould Shaw, the twenty-five-year-old son of abolitionists. As the small, sad-faced Shaw, Matthew Broderick shows us the misery of a softhearted commanding officer who is determined to prepare his men for what's ahead. Denzel Washington, Morgan Freeman, and Andre Braugher are the usual representative group of enlistees who bicker and quarrel before they shape up and become fine soldiers, but the actors perform the roles as if they've never been played before. Although the script is a conventional melodrama, the director, Edward Zwick, has made something more thoughtful than that. He doesn't have the instinct for images that would burst the written framework, but he's made a good film on a great subject. The screenplay, based partly on Shaw's letters, is by Kevin Jarre. With Jihmi Kennedy.—P.K. (2/5/90) (Eastside Cinema; through April 19.)

Henry V—Adapted and directed by its young star, Kenneth Branagh, this fast-paced version isn't exultant, like the one made forty-five years earlier by Laurence Olivier. Branagh emphasizes the price paid for war: the bloodshed. And, in keeping with his generation's supposed disillusion with war, he minimizes the play's glorification of the English fighting man. His conception of how to film the play is to look closely at the conniving, the misgivings, the ego wars. (This epic noir doesn't indicate why the French lost at Agincourt.) Branagh is not an overnight great moviemaker; his attempts at spectacular effects strain his inventiveness. But as an actor he has something of James Cagney's confident Irishness; he's intensely likable, with a beautiful, expressive voice and a straightforwardness that drives the whole film ahead. He and the other performers are so up that you feel their pride in working on true dramatic poetry. It's a company of stars: Paul Scofield as the melancholy French king whose face foretells the doom of his army, Christopher Ravenscroft as the herald Mountjoy, Derek Jacobi as the Chorus, Judi Dench as Mistress Quickly, Robbie Coltrane as Falstaff, Brian Blessed as Exeter, Richard Briers as Bardolph, Richard Easton as the Constable of France, Alec McCowen as Ely, Robert Stephens as Pistol, Emma Thompson as Katherine, Geraldine McEwan as Alice, Christian Bale as Falstaff's boy, and, best of all, perhaps, Ian Holm as the chattering Welshman Fluellen.—P.K. (11/27/89) (Quad Cinema, and Festival.)

Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer—Directed by John McNaughton. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Angelika Film Center.)

Holiday (1938)—In the thirties, Katharine Hepburn's wit and nonconformity made ordinary heroines seem mushy, and her angular beauty made the round-faced ingénues look piggy and stupid. Here she is in her archetypal role, as the rich tomboy Linda in Philip Barry's romantic comedy. She had understudied the role in 1928 on Broadway and had used it for her screen test, and she was the moving force behind this graceful film version, which Donald Ogden Stewart and Sidney Buchman tailored for her and which George Cukor directed. In the pivotal role of a man who wants a holiday in order to discover his values, Cary Grant manages to make a likable and plausible character out of a dramatist's stratagem. With Edward Everett Horton and Jean Dixon as the man's friends; Lew Ayres as Linda's brother; Henry Kolker as her father; Doris Nolan as her stuffy, patrician sister; and Henry Daniell and Binnie Barnes among her obnoxious relatives.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; April 19.)

The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne (1987)—A spinster in spite of her sensual nature, Judy Hearne, who lives in Dublin, is all pretension. Everybody sees through her, and she knows it, but she can't get rid of her own mealy-mouthed phoniness: it's ingrained in her. Maggie Smith, who plays the part, lets you read every shade of feeling in Judy's face; she makes you feel the ghastliness of knowing you're a figure of fun. Taken from Brian Moore's 1955 novel (a work of surpassing empathy written when he was only twenty-seven), the movie, directed by Jack Clayton, is a phenomenal piece of work. It's about Judy's misunderstanding the attentions of her landlady's brother (Bob Hoskins) and thinking herself to be in the midst of a romance; it's about her isolation, her secret drinking, and her rage against the Church for her wasted life. There has probably never been another movie in which a woman rejected the Church Fathers' ready-made answers. Maggie Smith and Wendy Hiller (who plays Judy's tyrannical aunt) are magnificent together, and the cast includes Ian McNeice, who, as the landlady's son, gives the film a baroque touch that helps offset the shallow, virtuous ending; Marie Kean as the landlady; and Rudi Davies as a young slavey. The adaptation is by Peter Nelson.—P.K. (Biograph Cinema; April 19.)

The Magic Flute (1975)—Ingmar Bergman said that making this film "was the best time of my life: you can't imagine what it is like to have Mozart's music in the studio every day." Actually, watching the movie, one can. He has treated Mozart's peerlessly silly masterpiece with elegance and supreme affection. He emphasizes the theatricality of the piece, using space as stage space but with the camera coming in close. We get the pixillated feeling that we're near enough to touch the person who is singing; we might be dreamers sailing invisibly among the guests at a cloud-borne party. The English translation of Bergman's adaptation (he clarifies the text) has considerable grace, and the titles are unusually well placed in the frame; the story comes across even more directly than when you hear the opera sung in English. Cinematography by Sven Nykvist. In Swedish.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; April 23.)

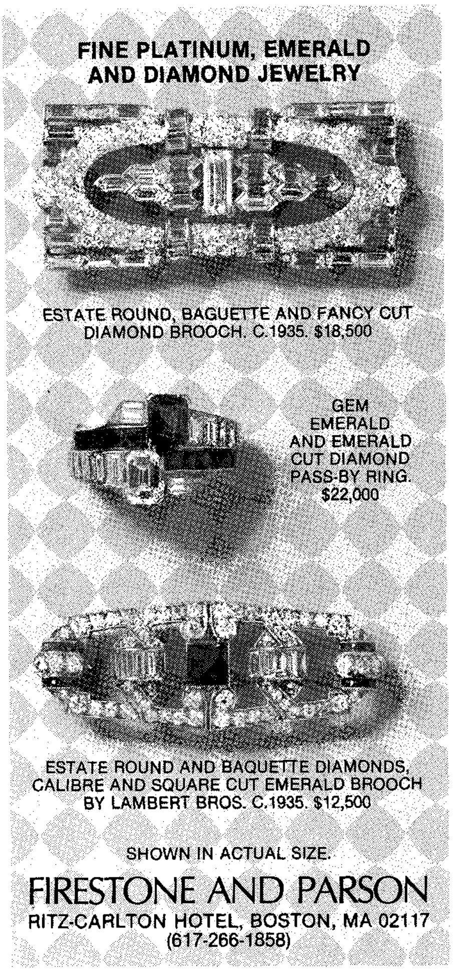
Miami Blues—With Fred Ward, Alec Baldwin, and Jennifer Jason Leigh; directed by George Armitage. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Loews 19th Street East 6, Loews 34th Street Showplace, Manhattan Twin, 86th Street East Twin, Loews Paramount, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex; starting April 20.)

Mountains of the Moon—An awfully strange movie about an 1857 expedition to discover the source of the Nile, and the subsequent feud between the explorers, Richard Burton (Patrick Bergin) and John Hanning Speke (Iain Glen). The director, Bob Rafelson, seems to be trying for a mixture of irony and spectacle, but he doesn't carry it off. Although he deliberately underplays the romance of nineteenth-century exploration, his historical irony isn't rigorous enough: it doesn't extend to Burton. Burton, a dashing intellectual adventurer, was in some ways ahead of his time; Rafelson distorts history to make Burton seem entirely a man of *our* time—the enlightened opposite of all the Victorian values and mores we now reject. The director and his cinematographer, Roger Deakins, give the film a wonderful look in the African scenes; during the explorers' arduous trek we often feel, despite everything that's going wrong, that we're on the verge of seeing something amazing. But, whatever it might be, it remains just over the horizon. The screenplay is by Rafelson and William Harrison (the author of a 1982 novel called "Burton and Speke").—T.R. (3/12/90) (Ziegfeld; through April 19.)

My Left Foot—The greatness of Daniel Day-Lewis's performance as the Dubliner Christy Brown, a victim of cerebral palsy who became a painter and a writer, is that he pulls you inside Christy's frustration and rage (and his bottomless thirst). There's nothing soft or maudlin about this movie's view of Christy: he's anguished and locked in, yet excitingly insolent. The movie may tear you apart, but it's the story of a triumphantly tough guy who lived it up, and Day-Lewis's interpretation has some of the sexual seductiveness that was so startling in Olivier's Richard III. This is the first film of the Irish playwright-director Jim Sheridan, who wrote the superb screenplay with another Irish playwright, Shane Connaughton. With Brenda Fricker.—P.K. (10/2/89) (Quad Cinema, Chelsea Cinemas, and Lincoln Plaza. . . . ¶ Cinema II; through April 19. . . . ¶ Cinema 3rd Avenue; starting April 20.)

Pretty Woman—The lovers in this romantic comedy, directed by Garry Marshall, are a long-legged, golden-hearted Hollywood Boulevard hooker (Julia Roberts) and a cold, suave corporate raider (Richard Gere). He buys her tasteful (expensive) clothes and shows her how to act "classy"; she opens—in order—his wallet, his fly, and his heart. The only real distinction of this long and rather uneventful diversion is the radical contrast between the stars' performing styles. Roberts is all ebullience and scattershot charm. The kind word for Gere's style is minimal. He's opaque, stubbornly remote; he seems to have faxed his performance in. The wild disparity between the leads' energy levels doesn't give the picture much excitement, though: Marshall sort of splits the difference between Roberts and Gere, and maintains an even, mildly bouncy tone throughout. At its worst, the movie is just unimaginative; at its best, it's pleasant and competent. It's business-as-usual entertainment. Also with Jason Alexander, Laura San Giacomo, Ralph Bellamy, and Hector Elizondo. The screenplay is by J. F. Lawton.—T.R. (Gramercy, Cinema I, 86th Street East Twin, 8th St. Playhouse, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy 1.)

Shadow of the Thin Man (1941)—Hardly even a shadow; Myrna Loy, William Powell, and Asta go through their paces for the fourth time, but the jauntiness is gone. This one is about a murder involving racetrack crooks, and the only thing that gives it any distinction is the cast. The most amazing people keep turning up: Stella Adler as a gambler's blond floozy, Barry Nelson as a muckraking reporter, Joseph Anthony, Donna Reed, Sam Levene, Louise Beavers, Alan Baxter, and many others. Too bad Harry Kurnitz, who wrote the story, didn't give them more to do; W. S. Van Dyke directed.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; April 24.)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THE NEW YORKER

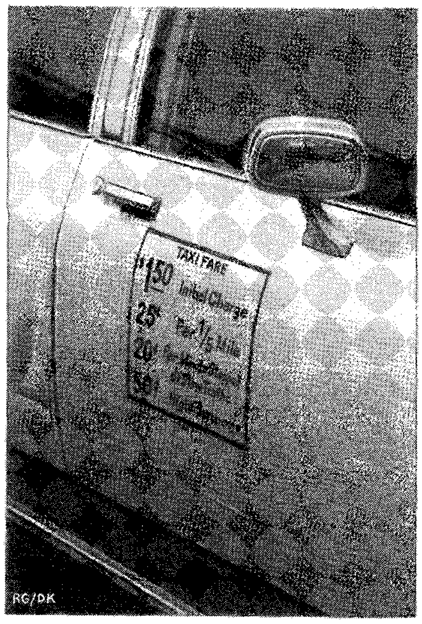
THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

NOT long ago, we took a slow trip out of Manhattan through multidirectional suburban traffic jams to a destination on a six-lane highway flanked by oceanic parking lots—a motel where we had to shout at the man behind the desk through a thick bulletproof shield, and where our room, when we finally reached it, seemed to be made entirely of disposable materials. (The huge, brand-new-looking television and air-conditioner didn't work. The windows wouldn't open.) We had come to this place because we were accompanying a relative to a conference of a self-help group of bereaved parents—people grieving for a son or a daughter who had died—called The Compassionate Friends. The junk wilderness of late-twentieth-century America in which these people got together conveyed futility, isolation, violence, and the message that people, too, are junk, but what we witnessed there was a miracle of human connectedness.

The participants came from all over the Northeast and, because death respects no boundaries, were as randomly selected as people struck by lightning. It is far from a foregone conclusion that the participants' common experience—the tragedy that they shared—would bond them, because one characteristic of grief for a child seems to be that it isolates people. Even a mother and a father who have suffered the loss together often cannot talk to each other about their grief, and, far from being able to support each other, become separated by it. (The rate of divorce after the death of a child is said to be eighty per cent.) Yet when these strangers gathered, something happened—some would call it "a dynamic," others "grace"—that allowed them to speak truthfully from the depths of their hearts and also to be receptive to each other's truths, where in other circumstances they could not do either, and, in this giving and taking, to begin to heal. What makes this possible and why it is healing remains the mystery and the miracle of self-help groups.

The self-help group is an American invention, and, in its improvisational, pragmatic, egalitarian, and antihierarchical character, it bears an American stamp. It is, furthermore, an invention of the late-twentieth-century American wilderness: it belongs there among the highways, the malls, and the fast-food places in the sense that it owes nothing whatever to the centers of culture, intellect, and high-level psychological research. In fact, the bastions of high-levelness tend on the whole to look upon the self-help mode with suspicion, if not outright scorn. The language of self-help literature, which is the form in which self-help is most accessible to anyone who wishes to form an opinion about it without actually joining a group, is often clumsy and simplistic, and is almost always debased by jargon. Bookstores now have entire sections given over to this literature, some of it worthless, some of it moderately useful, and some of it brilliant. But you won't see these books mentioned, much less seriously evaluated, in an intellectual journal except as part of a slumming excursion. The reason lies at the very heart of the nature of self-help: no one can tell by the style of one of these books, or even by its content, whether the book is worthwhile. You cannot tell by just reading it, or even by thinking about what you have read; you can tell only by applying what it says to yourself and putting its suggestions to use. The self-help mode is entirely practical. It spawns not philosophies but practices, not theories but ways of living. Its strength is its foundation in the realities of people's lives.



Its strength is also that it works. In fact, the only reason for the existence of self-help groups is that they work; they are not, for example, dedicated even in a secondary way to the pursuit of knowledge. Nor is there any economic reason for the continuation of a given group's existence: there is no institutional inertia to perpetuate a self-help group, and there are no jobs at stake; no money changes hands. (Nominal contributions for the rental of meeting places are sometimes solicited but rarely required.) Everybody in a self-help group is an equal of everybody else, and very obviously an equal: there is no aura of authority to cow an unconvinced participant into staying. If a self-help group stopped working, it would fall apart in no time. However, self-help groups do work, and often for people whom professionals have been unable to help; indeed, most people in self-help groups are there because professionals have failed them. There seems to be no room for expertise.

The Compassionate Friends is a relatively new group, in which fundamental principles of self-help are still being worked out, and the conference we attended had some speakers who did seem to have been chosen because of a certain expertise outside their personal experience. For example, one workshop was led by a psychiatrist, and it was especially well attended, evidently in the hope that a psychiatrist who was bereaved might have special insights to impart. The psychiatrist, though, said right off that his profession had been of no help to him in his effort to reconstruct his shattered emotional life after his daughter's death. "I am just one of you," he said, with a shrug that conveyed deep helplessness. Still, he seemed compelled by the expectations in the room, and perhaps by the presence in it of a teacher's desk and students' chairs, to try to deliver something in the vein of a lecture. That was a painful experience: the "lecture" was flat and uncommunicative, and the workshop was listless until the psychiatrist relinquished its leadership.

As it happened, the actual conference of The Compassionate Friends took place not in the junk wilderness but in a high school that, though it was only a few minutes away from the infernal motel, looked out over an unsullied New England valley. In the valley were farms nestled between wooded slopes, and every so often a two- or three-car train would hurry through its center, heading north or south. The last workshop that we attended was called "The Stress of Long-Term Illness," and it was held in a room with a view of the valley. It seemed almost as though a reassuring world of the past had momentarily reappeared in order to lend support in unreliable times. This workshop began with everyone sitting in a circle of chairs, and so the energy of equality flowed without hindrance. The stories told there were unimaginable, yet were delivered in a quiet, factual, undramatic manner; there was a mood of experimental calm, with moments of hesitation and thought as people with no map to go by felt their way along. Ten minutes from the end, a moment of thought extended into a silence that lasted until the workshop was over. It was a living silence, waiting for words to catch up with feelings. It was a connected silence. And it was a silence that represented a frontier. It was, above all, a late-twentieth-century American silence, and during it the vision of the past outside the window turned into a kind of nostalgic picture postcard as we all experienced a growing sense of excitement and privilege at living in our own time.

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Concept

IN honor of Earth Day this year, we rounded up a few people and made a visit to the New York Earth Room, Walter De Maria's famous installation of two hundred and fifty cubic yards of dirt, which fills a loft-size space at 141 Wooster Street, in SoHo, up to about two feet. Our group consisted of Paul, an artist; Margot, a writer and photographer; Milly, an office manager; Jack, an electrical engineer; and Ariel, Jack's granddaughter, who is four and a half.

"This is the Earth Room," Jack said. "Ariel, this is what earth is made of. Say, I don't see anybody walking around on it, but there also aren't any signs to tell you not to."

"There are little tiny animals in there," Ariel said. "There are worms sleeping in there."

"It's very quiet," Jack said. "Now, what else is there to do here? Nothing else? This is it? No movies? Lectures? Slides? Debates?"

"Is this sterile earth?" Milly said. "What's that Greek story about sterile earth?"

"One boy stepped in here, and he died in here," Ariel said. "Then he turned into the dirt."

"It smells fertile, but nothing's growing," Milly said.

"It's also strange that it's on the second floor, off the ground," Paul said. "It has a horizon line, but on the second floor."

"It's a concept of the natural world moved into a gallery space," Margot said.

"This earth gets better treatment than a lot of human beings," Jack said.

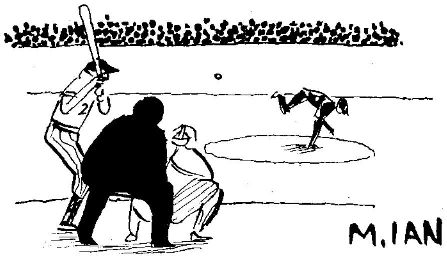
"Well, in a certain sense, this artist's work is about luxury," Margot said. "A kind of opulence. You think of how much it must have cost to bring the dirt here—the *right* kind of dirt in the *right* condition—and how much it costs to maintain it. But also opulence in the sense of beauty."

"Why opulence?" Milly said. "Why not decadence? Earth represents joy at being one with nature, but nothing seems to grow here. It's alienating."

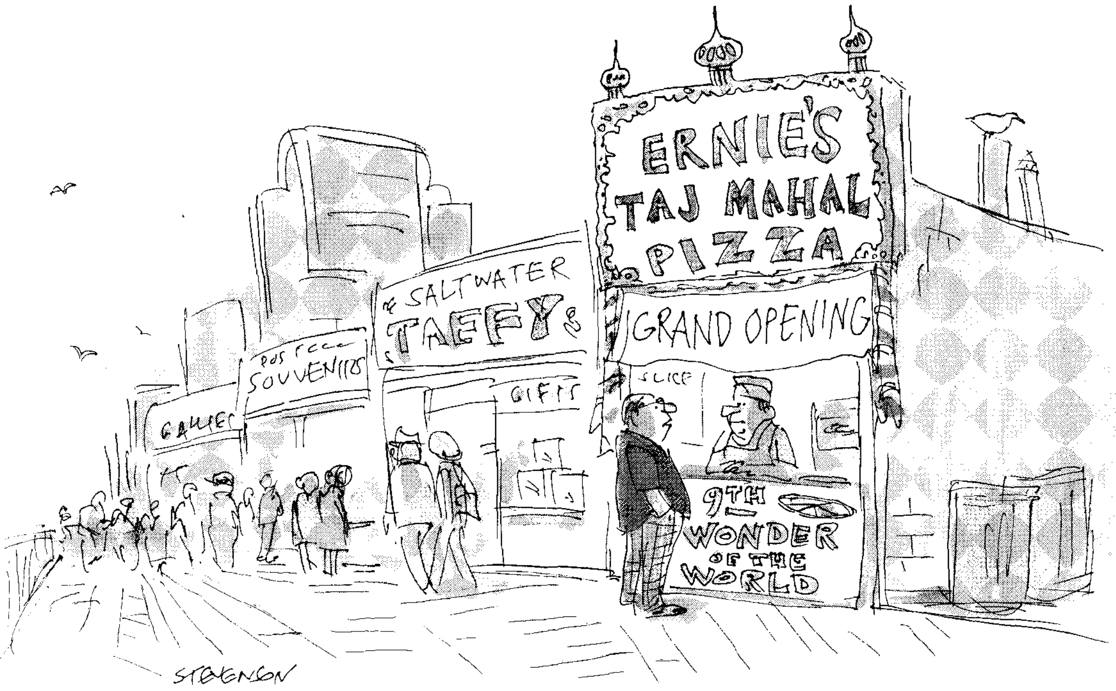
"If we came back in a million years, would this be rock?" Jack asked.

We posed Jack's question to Bill Dilworth, a painter who also works as the curator of the New York Earth Room, and he said he didn't think it would, since it's not under great heat or high pressure. Whenever the room is open—its hours are Wednesdays through Saturdays, noon to six—Mr. Dilworth is on the job, seated at a desk in a spacious alcove ready to give the inquiring visitor some printed information about the Earth Room, to answer questions, and to direct those unruly visitors who can't resist plunging their hands into the earth ("It's not encouraged," he says) to a small all-white bathroom, where they find a big bar of soap and a thick roll of paper towels. He told us that one of his duties is to keep the earth from hardening by hosing it down once a week. "I pour a lot of water on it," he said. "The whole process can take anywhere from five to seven hours. First, I go in and rake out the mushrooms. They're the white material you see. There are also stones throughout the earth, and they can be mistaken for mushrooms. Sometimes I take off my shoes and socks to do the raking. It's a kind of therapy to go in there barefoot."

Mr. Dilworth estimated that the Earth Room, which charges no admission, receives between a hundred and seventy-five and two hundred visitors a week, most of them on Saturdays. A few people visit it regularly. "The



Earth Room conveys a sense of refuge," he said. "A lot of people come and leave without interacting with me. One Japanese businessman who was working for a while in New York came up here with a piece of paper in his hand, looked at the room, looked at me, and seemed completely puzzled. On the paper were the words 'The best thing to do in New York' and the Earth Room's name and address. A friend had given him that note but hadn't told him whether the room would turn out to be a restaurant, a store, or what. When I explained to him what the Earth Room was, he went back and looked at it a long time. In the next month, he came back twice a week, and he stayed longer and longer. One time, he stayed an hour and a half, longer than anyone else has ever stayed. As always, he was very quiet, just leaning against the wall. He took a picture of the earth. Then he told me that he was on his way to the airport, going back to Japan. He might not be able to return for a few years, he said, but he loved the Earth Room."



"You may be asking for trouble, Ernie."

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Specialty

AT the New York Antiquarian Book Fair, a few weekends back, many of the hundred and sixteen booths in the Sheraton Centre basement warranted attention not only for their bound volumes but for what book collectors call rarities—a Faulkner typescript, with an asking price of seventy-five thousand dollars, for example, or a draft of a Jim Morrison lyric, going for fifteen thousand. At Booth 605, the rarities included North Vietnamese propaganda posters, circa 1972, priced at two hundred and fifty dollars each and displayed behind books about the Vietnam War. "The war was the experience I didn't have," Ken Lopez, a lean, grave man with a red-brown ponytail halfway down his back, told us. "In the early seventies, I lived underground to evade the draft. Afterward, I started reading about the war to see what my life might have been. As I read, I began to wonder if I'd done the right thing for the wrong reasons or the wrong thing for the right reasons. I haven't come up with a pat answer, but almost every time I read a piece of literature on the war it says something surprising and enlightening."

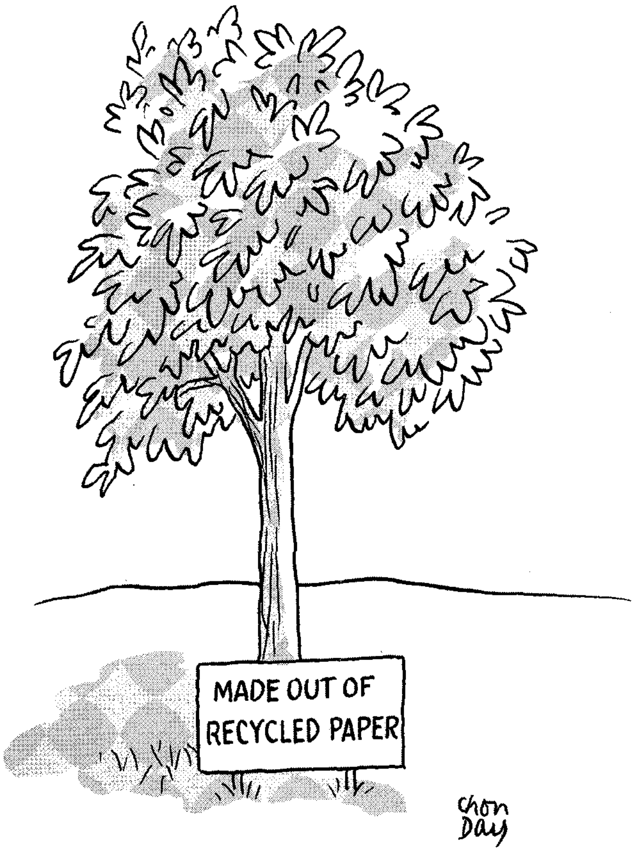
In 1975, after five years of living under an assumed name, he said, he went back to being Ken Lopez, and enrolled at Goddard College. Working at the school bookstore, he discovered the pleasant heft of a hardcover in the palm, and the sense of connection with an author which is inherent in a first edition. The first wave of post-Vietnam books began to arrive. Curious, he read Philip Caputo's "A Rumor of War"; "Dispatches," by Michael Herr; "Going After Cacciato," by Tim O'Brien; and "Writing Under Fire," an anthology by Jerome Klinkowitz and John Somer. He wanted more, he told us, but it was as if material about the war had been printed on air. "Many of those books came and went leaving hardly a trace," he said. "I felt that this was a body of writing that needed to be preserved, and I began buying everything I could on Vietnam—especially novels and personal accounts. In a few years, I had five or six hundred titles—everything from serious literature to paperback pornography."

After college, he took a trade-school course in computers. His parents offered him a free roost at their house, in New Jersey, and he hired on with a data-processing firm in midtown Manhattan. The Sirens beckoned: the Strand, the Barnes & Noble downtown sales annex. He was spending sixty or seventy dollars a week on books—besides Vietnam books, his library included works by John Irving, Ken Kesey, Robert Stone, John McPhee, and Peter Matthiessen—but didn't see himself as a real collector until 1979, when he wanted “Setting Free the Bears,” Irving’s first novel, which had come out in 1969. First editions were scarce, but a Maryland dealer had a copy for twenty-five dollars. “I thought that was *outrageous*,” Mr. Lopez said. “Until I looked at his catalogue and saw that books I’d been getting for three dollars were fifteen dollars.”

He began to buy copies of books he already had, and of books he didn’t want, to dangle as trade bait for books he did want. “I’d pick up a copy of Stone’s ‘A Hall of Mirrors’ for four dollars and offer it for a twenty-five-dollar credit to a dealer,” he said. “To show you something about the rate of appreciation, I recently had a copy of that book in my catalogue for two hundred and fifty dollars.”

In late 1980, his shelves were groaning, and to thin his stock he made up a catalogue and sent copies to eight dealers. He got back a three-hundred-dollar order. He was married by then, and he and his wife dreamed of a place of their own, in a college town, so he persuaded his employer to let him work at home and then moved to Hadley, Massachusetts, in the Connecticut River Valley and near five campuses. Buying books by phone or on forays into Boston, he kept juggling his two careers until his employer’s finances tightened and he was given the choice of an office job or no job at all. He picked a niche—postwar fiction, mostly American—and plunged into books full time. His catalogues fattened, and he began travelling the fair circuit: New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and numerous smaller cities up and down the East Coast. On one trip, his wares were both his undoing and his salvation: his overloaded Mazda flipped, but the book stacks acted as a roll bar and kept the roof intact.

Meanwhile, the Lopez basement seemed to be filling up with books about the war in Vietnam. In 1986, when he had about seven hundred and fifty volumes, he decided that his collection might serve a higher purpose elsewhere, and offered it as a single lot, for fourteen thousand five hundred dollars. Nobody bit. He finally broke it up, selling a third to one university and most of the rest to two others, whereupon somebody called and wanted the whole thing. It took him a month to assemble a similar package, and only slightly longer to see that he had a specialty. He has since put out six Vietnam-only catalogues. The first one had a hundred and thirty-six entries; the two most recent ones had seven hundred and thirty-four and five hundred and twenty-four. “I’m preparing a new catalogue now,” he told us. “The list is thirteen hundred and counting.”



Urban Rabbit

OUR friend the rabbit fan writes:

Jimmy and I will be boycotting the annual National Dutch Show this year. It’s to be held next week in New Haven, Connecticut, which is not that far from where we live, but, according to the description in the “American Dutch Rabbit Club Guide Book,” it’s the kind of event where rabbits are known by numbers tattooed on their ears rather than by their names, where “breeders” show “senior bucks” and “senior does” in competitions for Best of Breed, and where, at an auction, you can add some new Dutch to your “herd.” I don’t have a herd; I just have Jimmy. I prefer that he be appreciated for his personality rather than for his coat, and I know that he would very much resent being tattooed on the ear. He would certainly never let himself be rolled around on a table by a complete stranger, judge or no judge.

The Dutch rabbit, like a gentleman in evening clothes, is a sharp dresser. Stamped on his black face and coming to a point between his black ears is a white triangle, called a blaze. His front third (except for his face and ears) and his forefeet are white; his rump, tail, hind legs, and hind feet (except for white toes, called foot stops) are black. Like the ace of spades in a deck of cards, he stands for boldness, and Jimmy is true to form. When I brought him home from the Ninety-second Street A.S.P.C.A. nine months ago, he jumped instantly out of the cardboard carrying case, made a quick circuit of the apartment, washed his face, and pushed it under my hand to be petted. He didn’t just make himself at home; he acted as if he owned the place.

Now as soon as I get home and open the door to his cage, he rushes out and into the bathroom, making a flying leap into the litter box he keeps there. (He has one in his cage, too.) He marks the rim of the box and the heater vent next to it with the scent glands under his chin, pees, and then kicks up some litter with his hind feet, just for the fun of it. Then he runs out and circles my feet for a few minutes, and also the feet of anyone who’s visiting, and marks them either with his chin or, if he’s in the mood, with a quick spray of special urine, the smell of which tells everyone that he’s the dominant rabbit in this territory.

This last is what *I* would describe as one of Jimmy’s few flaws, but the “American Dutch Rabbit Club Guide Book” would instead point out a slight dip in his saddle (the black line across his back comes to a point in the middle), slightly uneven cheek markings, and the way the black of his back "drags" onto his white right foreleg. The insignificance of these idiosyncrasies is obvious, however, to everyone who knows him. A friend has described him as "the Cary Grant of rabbits," which accurately captures his offhand elegance and his flair for slapstick. In the mornings, when he's frisky, he shakes his ears and waggles his rear at the same time, like Ferdinand the Bull; in the evenings, when he's in a hurry to get to the kitchen for some important business, he runs so fast he slides on the wooden floor.

He's invariably good-natured. The female rabbits I've had were large and regal and sometimes preferred their privacy; they communicated this preference in the same way that their female counterparts in the wild put off bothersome males—by raising their forepaws and striking out. Jimmy never does that. He's always in the mood for heavy petting. He rests his chin on a corner of the futon, and if no one pets his head within about ten seconds he bites the sheets.

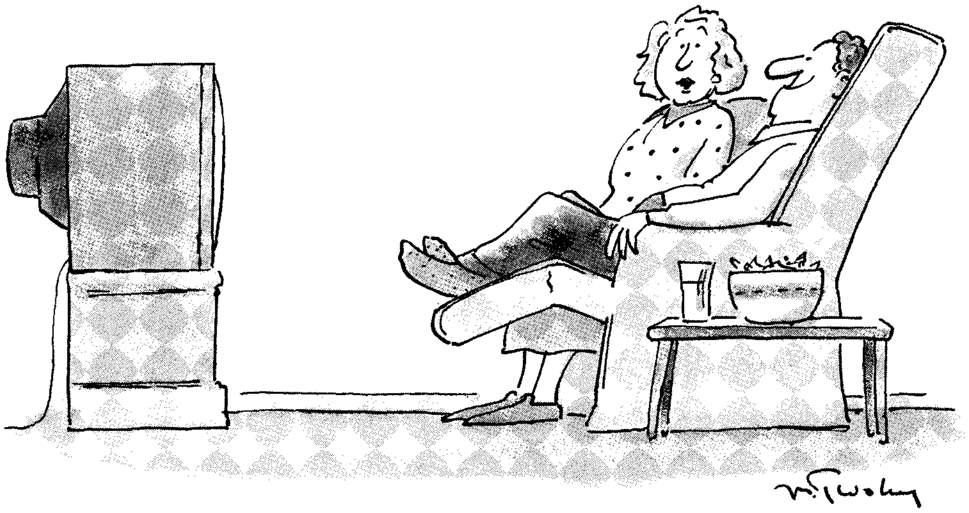
The one thing that is unpredictable about Jimmy is when and why he stamps. Rabbits stamp powerfully to alert others to danger: they lift their rears in the air and come down hard on their back feet. The hollow thump is so loud it sounds like a knock on the door; it can wake a person from a sound sleep. Jimmy rarely stamps, but when he does it's often during what seems to be complete silence. His ears quiver with the tension of his responsibility, and his whole body goes stiff, like that of a hunting dog pointing. He ignores all attempts to distract him, and generally makes me feel helpless and foolish, like a bystander in an emergency who doesn't know C.P.R.

I'm afraid I occasionally disappoint Jimmy in other ways, too—usually by trapping him between my knees on a towel, forcing his mouth open by inserting a finger in the side of his mouth between his front teeth and his back molars, and plunging ten cc.s of fresh pineapple juice down his throat with a plastic syringe. There's an enzyme in fresh pineapple juice that's supposed to prevent hairballs, but he doesn't know this. He fights valiantly and violently, and usually ends up taking the juice in by licking it off his fur afterward. He never holds a grudge.

I joined the American Dutch Rabbit Club last month, because I thought that its periodical, *The Dutch Reporter*, might have some useful tips on how to administer pineapple juice—or, at least, some anecdotes about rabbits like Jimmy. But correspondents of *The Dutch Reporter* don't seem to look on rabbits as real individuals; they talk about them as if they were ears of corn to be perfected genetically. In the January-February issue, there were several chilling letters. Doris Leibel, of Grantsburg, Wisconsin, wrote, "I could care less if I sell a rabbit as I like to keep the good ones and the rest go to the table." And Zandra Belson, in Nashville, Michigan, agreed: "If I have rabbits that have faults I wouldn't want to buy, then that rabbit goes into the freezer!" A chapter in the guidebook on "Culling Dutch" goes right to the point: "Eliminate the runts (very small ones)."

But I guess I owe the Dutch Club something. I always knew what made Jimmy's character unique, but now that I know the flaws in his markings I can pick him out of a crowd. The usefulness of this skill hadn't occurred to me until I saw a film at the Museum of Modern Art called "Celia," about a nine-year-old girl growing up in the Australia of the nineteen-fifties, when pet rabbits were banned briefly by the Australian government as part of its Draconian crackdown on rabbits of every kind. (Not native, they were running amok.) The film is a sort of rabbit lover's revenge fantasy: after a pompous policeman takes Celia's beautiful white rabbit, Murgatroyd, into custody, she gets her father's rifle out of the closet and shoots the policeman dead. But the dénouement is tragic. After the government relaxes its rabbit laws, Celia and her friends go to a holding pen to claim their pets and are seen wandering disconsolately through a rabbit throng (many Dutch among them), unable to identify their own.

Some people would take such a scene as evidence that rabbits aren't really individuals at all—that they're just rodents (they're actually lagomorphs) or warm-blooded toys for children. People like that would probably talk about Konrad Lorenz, and the emotional properties of round faces and big eyes, and the trope of the Easter Bunny. Don't buy it. Anybody who lives with a rabbit as a roommate knows that it's not a baby substitute or a warm fuzzy or a prize tulip. R. M. Lockley, the author of "The Private Life of the Rabbit," observed that man shares with the rabbit a variety of moods—a tendency to fight when he thinks he can win, an intense interest in the sexual activity of his neighbors, and an occasional sudden onset of joie de vivre. There's not much to choose between us, he says: "Humans are so rabbit."



"What's happening to us, Bob? We used to be so issue-oriented."

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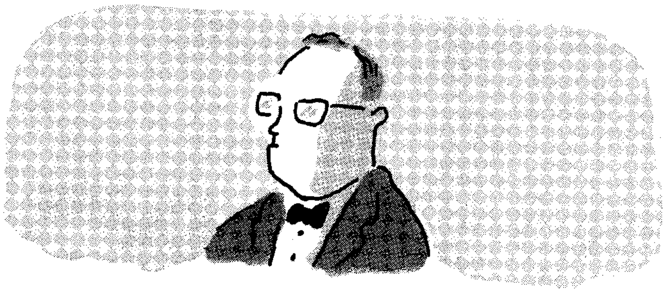
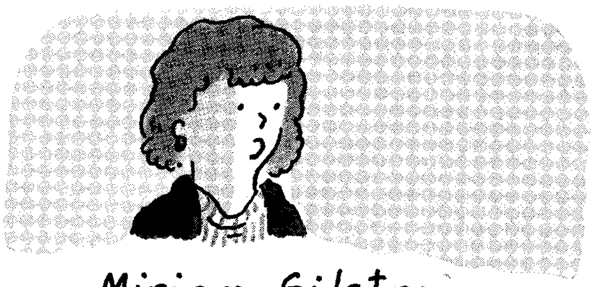
The F.B.I.'s Least Wanted



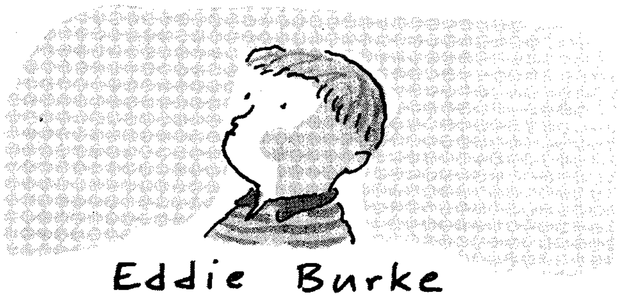
Harold Sherry

A.k.a.: "Harry the Brain"; "Mr. Nice Guy"; "Bookworm Harry."
Date of Birth: March 18, 1941.
Place of Birth: Douge, Pennsylvania.
Height: 5'8". Weight: 175 lbs.
Hair: Light brown. Eyes: Blue.
Occupation: Retired English professor; private clarinet tutor.
Identifying Marks: Faint liver spots on hands.
Comments: Sherry is a shy, quiet person capable of blending in with any or all woodwork. Should be considered disarming and courteous.



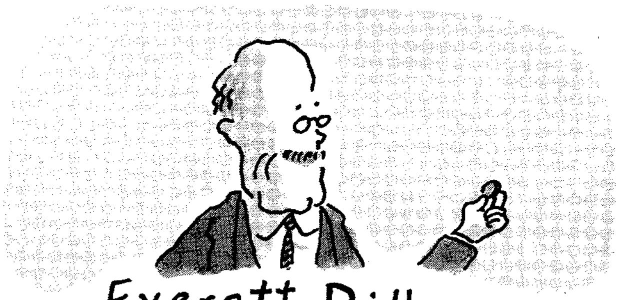
Miriam Gilatny

A.k.a.: "Mimi"; "Little Goody Two-Shoes"; "Shelf-Paper Suzie."
Date of Birth: September 1, 1952.
Place of Birth: Rashville, Illinois.
Height: 5'2". Weight: 110 lbs.
Hair: Brown. Eyes: Hazel.
Occupation: Housewife.
Identifying Marks: None.
Comments: Gilatny whimsically switches from contact lenses to eyeglasses and back again. Is reportedly considering highlighting her hair.



Eddie Burke

A.k.a.: "Dirty Eddie"; "The Kid"; "Eddie Tarzan."
Date of Birth: August 9, 1980.
Place of Birth: Charleston, S.C.
Height: 4'2". Weight: 65 lbs.
Hair: Blond. Eyes: Blue.
Occupation: None at present.
Identifying Marks: Numerous small scrapes, bruises, scabs, and Indian burns. Ballpoint-pen Tattoo "RAD" on left hand.
Comments: A three-time non-offender, Eddie excels in school, sports, and tree-climbing. A nicer kid you couldn't find, even though his parents tend to spoil him rotten.



Everett Dill

A.k.a.: "Pops"; "Gramps"; "The Corduroy Cutup."
Date of Birth: May 30, 1914.
Place of Birth: Bonwit, Mass.
Height: 6'1". Weight: 135 lbs.
Hair: Gray. Eyes: Green.
Occupation: Part-time museum docent; amateur magician.
Identifying Marks: Small scar on chin; wandering left eye.
Comments: Possibly the least wanted man in America today, Dill is well known for his rambling, pointless stories, his misguided advice, and his annoying habit of pulling nickels out of the ears of small children.

Shanahan

SPRING FUGUE

THE first orchestral realization that something is up: Playing Vivaldi's "The Four Seasons" on a spavined CD player. It was a gray day in early February and the sun came out; and I was thinking, "The Dry Cleaners, The Dry Cleaners, The Dry Cleaners, The Dry Cleaners."

The first crocus: The Sunflower Market, Thai Vegetables and Seeds, 2809 Broadway, February 14th. Spindly and snow-flecked.

First cold, March 19th-April 2nd. My wife and I are on our way to our accountant's. On the way I see two drunks fighting in front of the OTB on Broadway at Ninety-first; April is the duellists' month. Tacitly flirting with my wife, I carry two small packets of Kleenex in my pockets—one for her, because of her allergies: she makes a small nifty nasal piccolo announcement of the annual change in her life. I make the second really bad pun of the season: We sound like Bruce Springsteen and accompanist doing Bach's "The Cold Bug Variations."

First episode of spring nosiness not having to do with allergies or nose-blowing: I don't know why the soul's primary mechanics should consider spying or snooping a natural attribute of renewed life, but in the office icebox I see a small gold-colored can, shaped like a shoe-polish can, of caviar, and I wonder, jealously, who is so happy and so bent on celebration (or self-indulgence), but when I open it, it is empty, and written on the bottom of the can, in pencil, is the phrase "Hard Cheese."

First philosophical guess: My guess is that spring is a natural way of suggesting adolescence as something one should start to go through again: genetic duty and genetic activity *are* romance. Hmm. . . . Nature is as tricky as any politician.

The thought of George Bush leads to The First Depression of the Season.

First emotional detail: More light on the windowsill.

First piece of strange advice to one's self: *Lighten up.*

First symptom of intellectual confusion (on waking after dreams of fair women and of various unspeakable acts with them; memory, those astonishing chambers of lost realities, becomes overactive, leaving a broad sensation of gambling. . . . Roué-lette): The enumeration of the bedroom furnishings—a nightstand, one-night stand, two-night stands, three-night stands. . . .

No, no.

In the bathroom, first session practicing smile.

First impulse of active love: A sloppy kiss while my wife is putting on her shoes.

She gazes at me. "Oh, it's spring," she says.

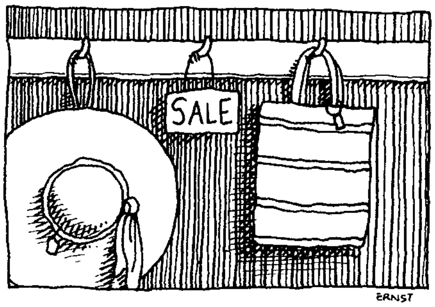
Shopping list for first three-day weekend in the country to rent a house for the summer: Contac, Kleenex, Beatles tape, citronella candles (to leave in the rented house if we find it), jump rope (for losing weight), walking shoes, jeans one size too small (to force oneself to diet), a handful of short-lived cut lilac to carry in the car as an *aide-mémoire*. . . .

FIRST equinoctial death shudder and racial memory of human sacrifice for the sake of warmth and the return of summer: A roadkill on 32A outside of Saugerties—a no longer hibernating but probably still torpid, thin woodchuck.

Second such event after returning home: Cutting my thumb while using a new, Belgian, serrated-edge slicing knife that slipped on a small Israeli tomato, while I was thinking about Super Tuesday two years ago and whistling Dixie.

Am I unconsciously Angry?

First hysterical delusion: Advertised medicines that come to mind when seeing in a moment of stress spring flowers in the mind—Nuprin-yellow jonquils, tetracycline-colored tulips (red-and-yellow ones). Tylenol-colored clouds (Tylenol is Lonely T spelled backward). Advil-colored dirt. Theragran-M-colored drying blood.



With my hand betowelled and my soul a little mad with pessimism about the current ways we live, and with gaiety, heroism, and the spring wound, I phone my wife at her office. She makes more money than I do.

Advice, sympathy, *information* from my wife's assistant while I am waiting for my wife to end a meeting. It is possible that even the assistant makes more money than I do. (I am a schoolteacher.) She says that in the stores is a helping-the-blood-clot-and-disinfectant-and-anesthetic spray; and there are clutch bandages. But: "Beware," she says, "the spray depletes the ozone layer, and the clutch bandage harms circulation." The finger may turn Nuprin-yellow, crocus-yellow, coward's yellow.

The conversation with my wife is out of a melodramatic domestic novel, except that at work she is Nietzschean. I refer to her being possessed by the will-to-power.

My wife says, "How deep is the cut?"

"I think I see the bone."

She says, "Do you see any white?"

"Yes."

"That's the tendon. Bones aren't white while you're still alive. They're not white until you clean them after you rob them from a grave. You may have cut the tendon. Can you move it?"

"No. Yes. It looks like a bone."

"It isn't the bone. But there are nerves in there—"

"Is that true? That's not just hypochondria?"

"You should be able to see only one nerve, unless it's a really big cut—do you see it?"

"See the nerve?"

"It's a thing, it's visible."

"What does it look like?"

"A thread. Does it make you sick to look at the wound?"

"No. What makes you think that?"

"Well, take a look and tell me what you see."

There is a silence and then she calls out, "Hey, hey, hey."

"I fainted a little. I'm sort of on my

JOURNEY TO... The Land of Enchantment
Someday I'll live in Paris.
We don't really have termites.
In 50 years, my Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles will be worth a small fortune.
That math test is going to be a breeze.
R. Chast

• •

knees here. Hold on, let me get up. Whoo, that was stupid. What I saw was gray-white; there's quite a lot of gray-white. I suppose I saw blood but it looked gray-white and blood isn't gray-white, it's bluish, I remember, I—"

"You're in shock. Is there anyone with you?"

"I was cutting a tomato."

"Yes?"

"Someone is coming over—someone will be here soon. You. But you can't come home. You're at work. Should I go get a clotting spray?"

"Go to the emergency room at the hospital. You did this call?"

"I don't remember," I say miserably.

"You cut your thumb?"

"Yes. I guess so. Unless this is all a dream," I say hopefully.

"Did you dial with your left hand?"

"I wrapped my hand in a towel and I squeezed the towel with the other hand. I dialled with my little finger. It's touch-tone, the phone is. . . . I think."

"I forget if there are large numbers on the touch-tone phone or small ones."

"Tiny, really."

"Are they stubborn or easy?"

"Stubborn."

"Then if you dialled and didn't bleed all over the phone you're probably O.K."

"Would you say you were showing sympathy?"

"You may quiver with madness and shock at my saying this, but I promise that if you stay overnight at the hospital I will bring you volumes of Kundera, Solzhenitsyn, Havel, so you can see what horror and suffering truly are."

"Shit."

"On the other hand, our Maltese doorman's sister-in-law died of sepsis after a knife cut in her hand which she got chopping beets when she was visiting her mother-in-law in Valletta. Wait for me. I'm coming home."

MY wife is a Spring Goddess. A Nietzschean Nightingale (Florence). "Here," she says. "Let me look. . . . A kiss won't make that well. Let's go." A kiss or two later, as we pass a homeless guy who at first I think is me in the third person hailing a taxi, and as my shock begins to lift, I say to her, sadly, "When I was a child, I had a Swiss barometer with a wooden house on it. The house had two doors. Out of one came a boy in shorts and with a Tyrolean hat on, and I think a girl in a dirndl came out of the other. They went inside if it was going to rain." Nowadays I suppose you might have a homeless person carved in wood and sleeping on a subway grating to indicate good weather and going into an arcade or a subway to indicate rain.

Some prose written after the third kiss from her (and after the doctor took three stitches in my thumb). I sit at her desk in her office looking out her large window: Give me the huge actual clouds of the Republic and not the meagre udders of water vapor painted on the old backdrops the Republic Studio used in John Wayne's day. We like the actual big baggy clouds of a New York spring. One doesn't want to flog a transiting cloud to death, but if we are to have sentimental light, let us have it at least in its obvious local form—dry, white, sere, and, I guess, provincial. The spiritual splendor of our drizzly and slaphappy spring weather, our streets jammed with sneezing pedestrians, our skies loony with bluster are our local equivalents of lilac hedges and meadows.

Blustery, raw, and rare—and more wind-of-the-sea-scoured than half-melted St. Petersburg. Yuck to cities that have an immersed-in-swamp-and-lagoon moist-air light. They are for watercolorists. Where water laps at the edges of the stones and bricks of somewhat wavery real estate is not home. Home is New York, stony and tall: its real estate is real.

So is its spring.

—HAROLD BRODKEY

FULL EMPLOYMENT

MY American friend Simpson, the European sales representative for NATCA, a major United States office-machine company, was lamenting the current atmosphere in the Italian marketplace.

"Exactly the same as in 1929," he said. "You're young and you wouldn't remember, but it's exactly the same as then: disheartenment, inertia, lack of initiative. And do you think that over there in the States—where, after all, things aren't going so badly—they would give me a hand? Just the opposite: this year, precisely when we need something new, something revolutionary, you know what our development office, with its four hundred technicians and fifty scientists, has come up with? Here, look: this is all." He pulled a metal box from his pocket and plunked it scornfully on the table.

"You tell me, how can a person represent this with any enthusiasm? It's a pretty little machine, I won't deny it, but, believe me, it takes a lot of courage to run from customer to customer with nothing but this in hand, and try to convince them that *this* is the great NATCA innovation of the year."

"What can it do?" I asked.

"There, that's exactly the point: it can do everything—and nothing. As a rule, machines are specialized: a tractor pulls, a saw saws, a versifier makes verses, a photometer measures light. Whereas this here can do anything, or almost. It's called the Minibrain: even the name is no good in my opinion. It's presumptuous and vague, and it doesn't translate. In short, the thing has no commercial appeal whatsoever. It's a four-track data selector, that's what it is: do you want to know how many women named Eleonora were operated on for appendicitis in Sicily in 1940? Or how many of the suicides in the entire world from 1900 to date were both left-handed and blond? Just push this key and you'll have your answer in an instant: but only if you have first introduced the categories here. I'm sorry—forgive me if it's not much. Well, as far as I'm concerned it's a huge mistake, and the company will pay dearly for it. NATCA claims it's innovative in that it's pocket-size, and also in its price. Do you want one? Twenty-four thousand lire and it's yours: you'd think it was made in Japan. But you know what? If within the year they don't give me something more original—despite my sixty years, thirty-five of them working for this company—I'll leave them flat. No, no, I'm not joking. Luckily, I have other irons in the fire: I don't want to sound conceited, but I feel I could be doing something better than placing selectors in a depressed market."

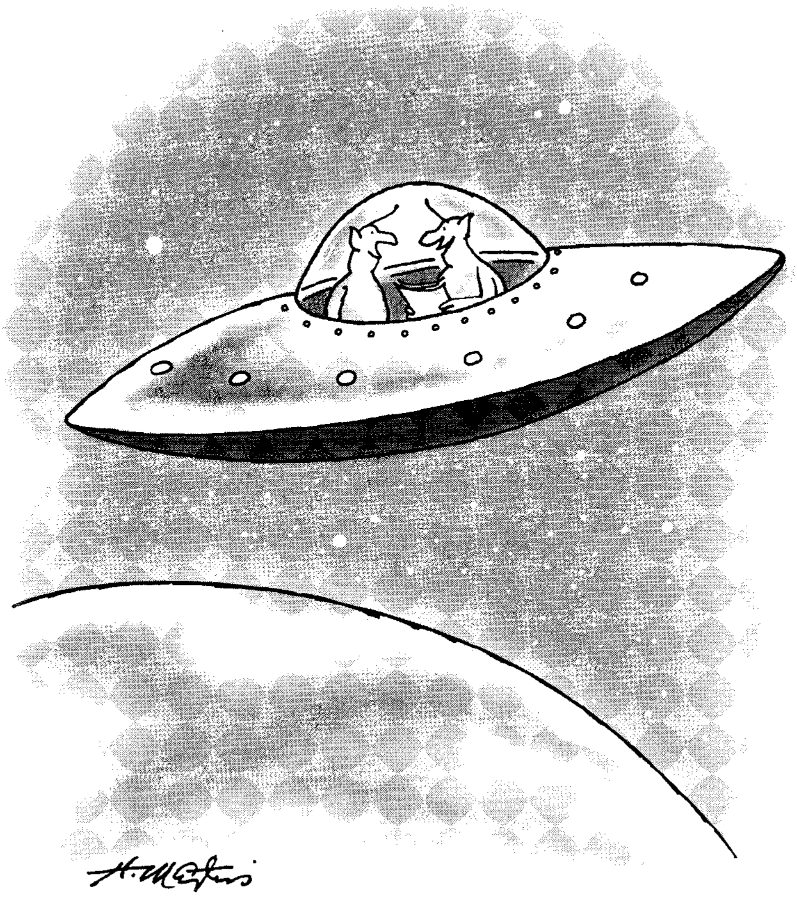
All through this outburst, which was taking place at the end of one of those prodigal banquets which, in spite of everything, NATCA continues to organize every year for its best customers, I had followed Simpson's mood with curiosity. Despite his words, he did not seem at all discouraged: on the contrary, he was unusually animated and gay. Behind his thick glasses, his gray eyes gleamed vivaciously—or was it perhaps just the effect of the wine that both of us had drunk in abundance?

I decided to smooth the path to confidentiality. "I, too, am convinced that, with your experience, you can do something better than going around selling office machines. Selling is difficult, often disagreeable, yet it's an occupation that fosters human contacts, that teaches something new every day. . . . After all, NATCA isn't the only company in the world."

Simpson promptly accepted the gambit I offered him. "That's just it: at NATCA either they're wrong or they exaggerate. This is an old idea of mine: machines are important, we can no longer do without them, they condition our world; but they're not always the best solution for our problems."

The gist of all this was not very clear; I attempted a new probe. "Certainly: the human brain is irreplaceable. This is a truth that the people who design electronic brains tend to forget."

"No, no," Simpson answered impatiently, "don't talk to me about the human brain. First of all, it's too complicated; besides, it's far from proved that it can manage to understand itself; and finally there are too many people working on it. Good people, disinterested, I'll agree to that, but too many; there are mountains of books and thou-



"I hope my address to the American Astronomical Society will bring us the credibility we've been seeking."

MAKING BREAKFAST

There's this ritual, like a charm,
Southern women do after their men
make love to them in the morning.
We rush to the kitchen. As if possessed.
Make one of those big breakfasts
from the old days. To say thank you.
When we know we shouldn't. Understanding
the act smacks of Massa, looks shuffly as
all getout, adds to his belly, which is bad
for his back, and will probably give him
cancer, cardiac arrest, and a stroke. So,
you do have to wonder these days as you
get out the fatback, knead the dough,
adjust the flame for a slow boil,
flick water on the cast-iron skillet
to check if it's ready and the kitchen
gets steamy and close and smelling
to high heaven, if this isn't an act
of aggressive hostility and/or a symptom
of regressed tractability. Although
on the days we don't I am careful
about broiling his meats instead of
deep-fat frying them for a couple of hours,
dipped in flour, serving them smothered
in cream gravy made from the drippings,
and, in fact, I won't even do
that anymore period, no matter what
he does to deserve it, and, besides, we are
going on eighteen years, so it's not as if we
eat breakfast as often as we used to,
and when we do I now should serve him
oatmeal after? But if this drive harkens
to days when death, like woolly mammoths
and Visigoth hordes and rebellious kinsmen,
waited outside us, then it's healthy, if
primitive, to cook Southern. Consider it
an extra precaution. I look at his face,
that weak-kneed, that buffalo-eyed,
Samson-after-his-haircut face, all of him
burnished with grits and sausage
and fried apples and biscuits and my
power, and adrift outside himself,
and the sight makes me feel all over
again like what I thank him for
except bigger, slower, lasting, as if,
hog-tied, the hunk of him were risen
with the splotchy butterfly on my chest,
which, contrary to medical opinion, does not
fade but lifts off into the atmosphere,
coupling, going on ahead.

—Mary Stewart Hammond

• •

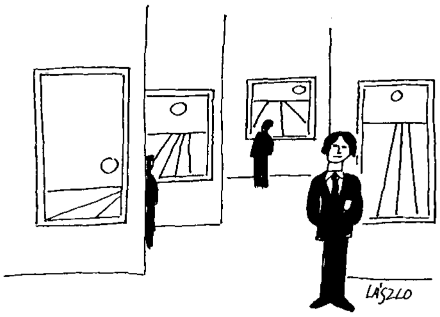
sands of companies, of other NATCAS—neither better nor worse than mine—where the human brain is being cooked in every kind of sauce. Freud, Pavlov, Turing, the cyberneticists, the sociologists, all of them manipulating it, denaturing it—and all our machines try to copy it. No, my idea is something else." He paused, as though he were hesitating; then he leaned over the table and said in a low voice, "It's not only an idea. Would you like to come out to my house on Sunday?"

IT was an old villa in the hills that Simpson had bought cheaply at the end of the war. The Simpsons welcomed my wife and me with cordiality and courtesy; I was very happy finally to meet Mrs. Simpson, a slim, gray-haired woman, mild and reserved, and yet full of human warmth. They asked us to sit down in the garden at the edge of a pond: the conversation limped along, distracted and vague, mainly because of Simpson. He looked up into the air, shifted on his chair, continually lit his pipe and let it go out: it was clear that he was in an almost comical hurry to get through the preambles and down to cases.

I must admit he managed this quite elegantly. While Mrs. Simpson was serving tea, he asked my wife, "Would you like some blueberries? There are a great many on the other side of the valley, and they're excellent."

"Please don't go to any trouble—" my wife began.

Simpson answered, "Not at all!" Then he pulled from his pocket a small instrument that looked like a panpipe, and blew three notes. We heard a light, sharp flutter of wings, the water of the pond rippled, and a swift flight of dragonflies passed over our heads. "Two minutes!" Simpson exclaimed triumphantly, and clicked his wrist chronometer. With a smile at once proud and embarrassed, Mrs. Simpson went into the house, reappeared with an empty crystal bowl, and set it down on the small table. At the end of the second minute the dragonflies returned like a wave of minuscule bombers: there must have been several hundred. They hovered above us in stationary flight, amid a metallic, almost musical rustle; then one by one, abruptly, they descended over the bowl, slowed their flight, dropped a blueberry, and flew off in a flash. In a few instants, the bowl was full: not a single blueberry had missed it, and they were still freshly gleaming with dew.



"It always works," Simpson said. "It makes a spectacular demonstration, but it's not very stringent. In any event, since you've seen it, there's no need for me to try to convince you with words. Now you tell me: if this is possible, what would be the point of developing a machine to gather blueberries in two acres of woods? And do you believe it's even possible to design a machine that could do it—in two minutes, without the slightest din, without consuming fuel, without getting damaged, and without damaging the woods? And what about the cost—just think! What is the price of a swarm of dragonflies? Which, aside from anything else, are actually very pretty."

"Have these dragonflies been . . . conditioned?" I foolishly asked. I had been unable to keep from throwing a furtive glance of alarm at my wife, and I was afraid that Simpson might have

"Oh-oh, we're in trouble!"

• •

noticed it and understood its meaning. My wife's face was impassive, but I distinctly sensed her unease.

"They're not conditioned; they are at my service. Indeed, more precisely, we have come to an agreement." Simpson leaned back in his chair and smiled benevolently, gloating over the effect of his pronouncement. Then he resumed. "Of course, it might be better to start from the beginning. You have read, I imagine, about von Frisch's brilliant work on the language of the bees: the dance in figure eights, its modalities and its meaning in relation to distance, direction, and amount of food. The subject first fascinated me twelve years ago, and since then I've devoted all my free weekend hours to the bees. In the beginning, I only wanted to try to speak to the bees in their language. It seems absurd that no one thought of it before: it can be done with extraordinary ease. Come and see."

He showed me a beehive on which he had replaced the front panel with a frosted pane of glass. With a finger, he traced several oblique eights on the external face of the glass, and soon a small swarm issued, buzzing, from the little door.

"I'm sorry I tricked them, this time: southeast of here, at a distance of two hundred metres, there is nothing, poor dears. I only wanted to show you how I broke this ice, the wall of incomprehension, that separates us from the insects. I had made it difficult for myself at the beginning: imagine, for several months I danced in figure eights myself—all of me, I mean, not just my finger—yes, right in front here, on the meadow. They understood, but not easily, and besides it was exhausting and ridiculous. Later on, I realized that much less is enough: any signal whatsoever, as you saw, even with a twig, with a finger, as long as it conforms with their code."

"And the same with the dragonflies?"

"With the dragonflies, I have only indirect relations for the time being. There was a second step: I realized quite soon that the language of the bees goes far beyond the figure-eight dance signalling food. Now I can prove that they have other dances—I mean, other figures; I haven't yet managed to understand them all, but I've already been able to compile a small glossary containing a few hundred entries. Here it is: there are the equivalents of a good number of nouns such as 'sun,' 'wind,' 'rain,' 'cold,' 'heat,' et cetera; there's a vast assortment of plant names. In this connection, I've noticed that they have at least twelve distinct figures to indicate, for example, an apple tree, depending on whether the tree is large, small, old, healthy, wild, and so on—something like our terms for horses. They know how to say 'gather,' 'sting,' 'fall,' 'fly'—they have a surprising number of synonyms for flight, too; their own 'to fly' is different from the one they use for mosquitoes, butterflies, and sparrows. However, they make no distinction between walking, running, swimming, and travelling on wheels: for them, all movements on ground level or over water are 'sliding.' In regard to other insects, and above all flying insects, their lexical patrimony is just barely inferior to ours. On the other hand, they get along with an extremely generic nomenclature for the larger animals. For quadrupeds—everything from the mouse to the dog and the sheep on up—they have only two signs, which could be rendered approximately by 'small four' and 'big four.' They don't even distinguish between male and female quadrupeds; I had to explain the difference to them."

"And you speak this language?"

"Poorly, so far, but I understand it well enough, and I've used it to get them to explain some of the greater mysteries of the beehive: how they decide what day to slaughter the males, or when and why the queens will enter the death struggle, how they establish the ratio between drones and workers. They haven't told me everything, though: they keep certain secrets. They are a race with great dignity."

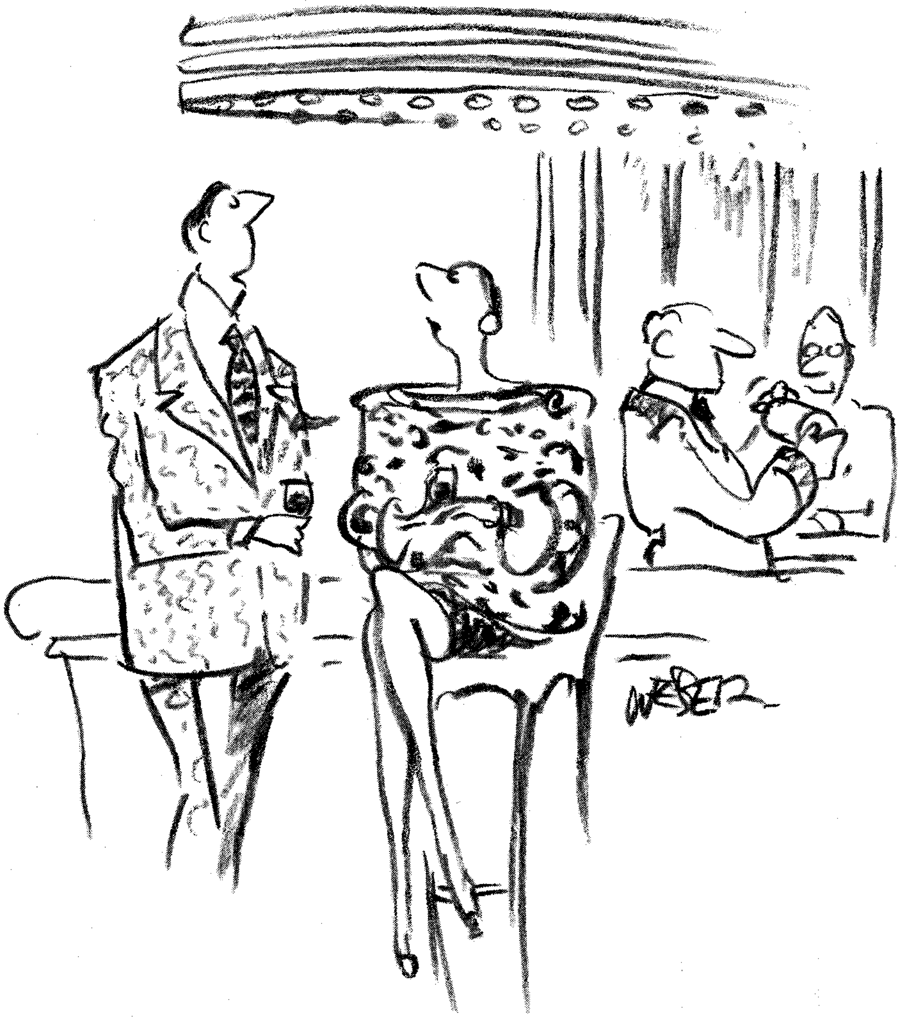
"Do they also speak to the dragonflies by dancing?"

"No: bees use dancing only to communicate among themselves, and (forgive my lack of modesty) with me. As for other species, I must tell you first of all that the bees have regular relationships only with those that are most evolved—especially with other social insects, and with those that have gregarious habits. For instance, they have rather close (though not always friendly) contacts with ants, wasps, and even with dragonflies; with locusts, on the other hand, and the Orthoptera in general, they confine themselves to commands and threats. In any case, the bees communicate with all the other insects by means of their antennae. Their code is rudimentary, but in compensation it is so swift that I've been absolutely unable to follow it, and I feel that it's irremediably beyond human capabilities. Besides, to tell you the truth, not only do I have no hope but I don't even have the wish to enter into contact with any insects but the bees: it would seem rather indelicate toward them, and, anyway, they act as intermediaries with great enthusiasm, almost as though they enjoyed it. To return to the code—the, let's call it, interinsectic code—I have the impression that it's not a true and proper language: rather than being rigidly systematized, it seems to rely on the intuition and imagination of the moment. It must be vaguely similar to the complicated and yet succinct method we men use to communicate with dogs (I'm sure you've noticed —haven't you?—that a man-dog language doesn't exist, and yet the understanding in both directions is considerable); but it is certainly richer, as you yourself will be able to see from the results."

HE led us to the garden and the arbor and pointed out that there wasn't a single ant in the area, and not because of insecticides. His wife didn't like ants (Mrs. Simpson, who was following us, blushed deeply), so he had offered them a deal: he would provide sustenance for all their colonies, right out to the perimeter wall (an expense of two or three thousand lire a year, he explained to me), and they would undertake to demobilize all the anthills within a radius of fifty metres from the villa; not to open new ones; and each day for two hours, from five to seven, to perform all operations of microcleaning and destruction of noxious larvae in the garden and villa. The ants had agreed; shortly afterward, though, through the bees' mediation, they complained about a certain colony of ant-lion grubs that infested a sandy strip at the edge of the wood. Simpson confessed to me that at the time he didn't even know that these were the larvae of insects that look like dragonflies. He had gone to the site, and had been horrified to see their bloodthirsty habits. The sand was studded with small conical holes; as he watched, an ant ventured to the rim and immediately plunged into the chasm, together with the loose sand. From the depths there emerged a pair of ferocious curved mandibles, and Simpson had to admit that the ants' protest was justified. He told me that he had felt both proud and confused at being asked to arbitrate: the good name of all mankind would depend on his decision.

He had summoned a small meeting: "It was last September, a memorable assembly. Bees, ants, and dragonflies participated—and the dragonflies rigorously and urbanely defended the rights of the larvae of their ant-lion confreres. They pointed out to me that the latter could in no way be held responsible for their feeding habits: they had very poor locomotion, and all they could do was lay traps for the ants or starve to death. At that, I proposed to allot them an adequate daily ration of balanced feed, the way we do with our chickens. The dragonflies requested a test run; the larvae showed they liked the food; and at that the dragonflies declared themselves ready to interpose their good offices, so that all threats to the ants would be discontinued. It was on that occasion that I offered the dragonflies a bonus for every expedition into the blueberry woods, but it is a service I rarely ask of them. They are among the most intelligent and hardy insects, and I expect a lot from them."

He explained to me that it had seemed to him improper to propose any type of contract to the bees, who were already too busy; on the other hand, he was involved in advanced negotiations with flies and mosquitoes. Flies, he said, were stupid, and you couldn't get much out of them—just that they shouldn't be a nuisance in autumn and should not frequent the stable and dung heap. In exchange for four milligrams of milk per day per head, they had



"Let's face it, Diana. I'm not good enough for you, and vice versa."

"Bon pillage!"

• •

agreed, and Simpson was planning to assign them to carry simple urgent messages, at least until he could get a phone installed in the villa.

With the mosquitoes, the negotiations promised to be difficult for other reasons: not only were they good for nothing but they also made it clear that they did not want to—indeed could not—give up human blood, or at least that of mammals. Because of the proximity of the pond, the mosquitoes constituted a considerable nuisance, so Simpson considered it desirable to work out some agreement. He had consulted with the town veterinarian, and he proposed to draw, every week, half a litre of blood from a cow in the stable. Adding a little citrate would keep it from coagulating, and according to his census it should be enough for all the local mosquitoes. He pointed out that the arrangement was not cheap, but it was still less costly than spraying DDT, and, furthermore, it would not disturb the biological balance in the area. This detail was not unimportant, because the method could be patented and utilized in all regions affected by malaria. He thought the mosquitoes would understand rather quickly that it was in their obvious interest to avoid becoming infested with plasmodia, and as for the plasmodia themselves, even if they became extinct, it would be no great loss. I asked him whether it wouldn't be possible to make analogous non-aggression pacts with other parasites that infest people and dwellings. Simpson assured me that, so far, contacts with nongregarious insects had proved difficult; that, on the other hand, he had not spent much effort on such projects, in view of the scant profit to be expected even at best; that, furthermore, he believed that the reason they were not gregarious insects was their inability to communicate. Nevertheless, on the subject of harmful insects, he had already prepared a draft agreement, approved by the Food and Agriculture Organization, and he planned to discuss it with a delegation of locusts immediately after their season of metamorphosis, with the help of a friend of his, the NATCA representative in the U.A.R. and Lebanon.

THE sun had set by now, and we went into the living room. My wife and I were filled with admiration and dismay; we couldn't quite bring ourselves to tell Simpson what we thought. Then my wife made up her mind, and with great difficulty she said that he had gotten his hands on . . . on something new and big, pregnant with scientific and even poetic possibilities.

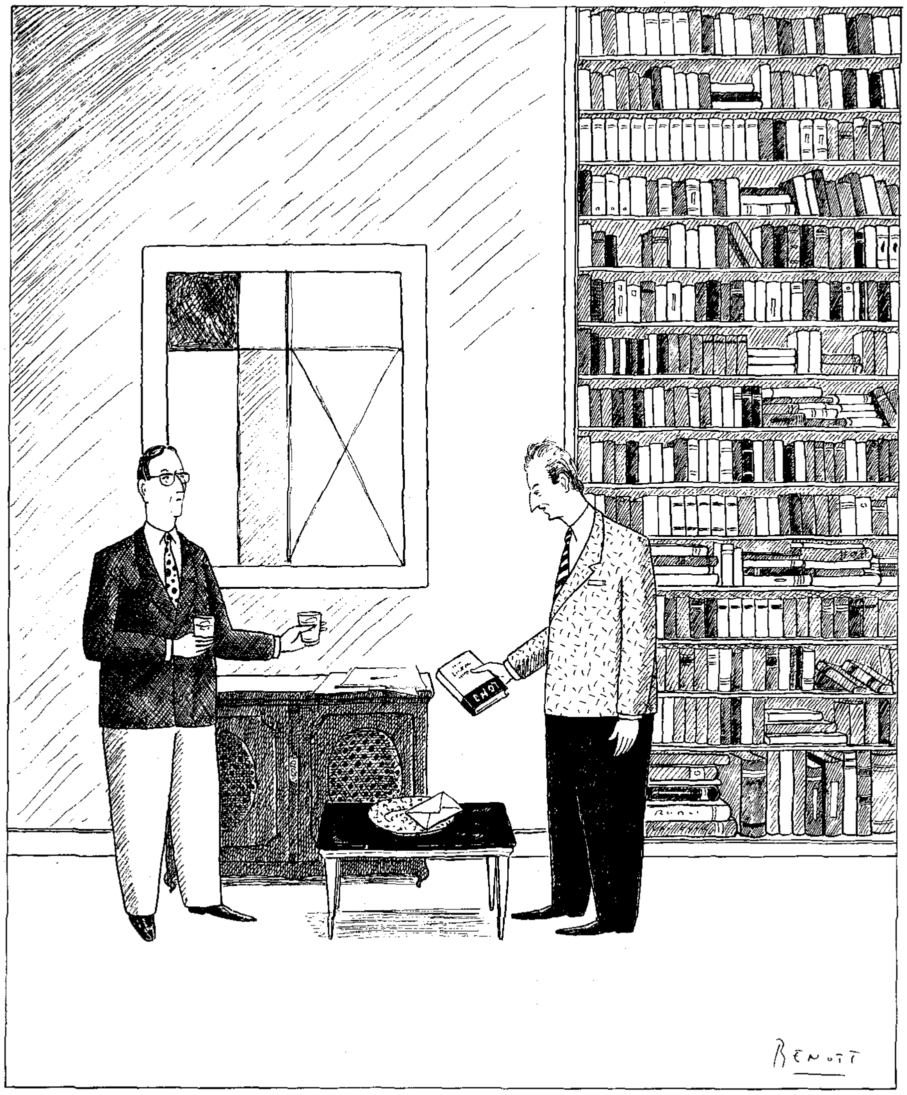
Simpson stopped her: "My dear lady, I never forget that I'm a businessman. Actually, I haven't told you about the biggest deal. I must beg you not to mention it in public yet, but I want you to know that this work of mine is of enormous interest to the NATCA top brass, especially to the Fort Kiddiwanee think tank. I've informed them, after having clarified the patent situation, of course, and it would seem that an interesting arrangement is in the offing. Now, look what I have in here."

He handed me a tiny cardboard box, no bigger than a thimble. I opened it. "There's nothing in here!"

"Almost nothing," Simpson retorted.

He gave me a magnifying glass. Against the white background of the box I saw a filament, thinner than a hair, perhaps a centimetre long. Around its middle I could make out a slight thickening.

"It's a resistor," Simpson said. "The thread is two microns thick, five at the joint. The whole thing costs four thousand lire; but soon it will cost only two hundred. The sample is the first that was assembled by my ants—by the pine-tree workers, the strongest and most skillful. In one summer I taught a team of ten, and they've trained all the others. You should see them—it's a



"The film is better."

• •

unique spectacle: two ants seize the two electrodes with their mandibles, another gives them a few twists and fastens them with a tiny drop of resin, then all three ants place the piece on the conveyor. It takes three ants forty seconds to assemble a resistor, including dead time, and they work twenty hours out of twenty-four. This has given rise to a union problem, inevitably, but these things can always be settled; they're satisfied, no doubt about it. They receive payment in kind, divided into two lots: one (so to speak) personal, which the ants consume during their work breaks, and the other collective, meant for the ant heap's stockpiles. That, they store in their abdominal pockets. All told, it takes fifteen grams per day for the entire working squad, which is made up of five hundred workers. That's three times as much as what they could scrape together during a day's foraging in the wood. But this is just the beginning: I'm training other squads for other 'impossible' jobs. One squad to trace the diffraction reticle of a spectrometer; another squad to repair miniaturized printed circuits, which until now were thrown away when they broke; another to retouch photographic negatives; four teams to perform auxiliary work during brain surgery, and I can tell you already, at this point, that they have proved irreplaceable in stopping hemorrhages of the capillaries. Just think about it for a moment, and immediately dozens of jobs come to mind that require a minimum output of energy but cannot be performed economically by humans because our fingers are too thick and slow, because a micromanipulator is too costly, or because they entail too many operations over too vast an area. I've already made contact with an agricultural station for some extremely exciting experiments: I would like to train an anthill colony to distribute fertilizers by 'home delivery'—I mean, one grain per seed; train another one to reclaim rice paddies by removing infesting weeds before they germinate; another to clean silos; another yet to produce cellular micrographs. . . . Life is short, believe me: I curse myself for having started so late. There is so little one can do on one's own!"

"Why don't you get a partner?"

"You think I haven't tried? I almost ended up in jail. I've become convinced that . . . What does that Italian proverb say? 'Better alone than badly accompanied.' "

"In jail?"

"Yes, because of O'Toole. Only six months ago. Young, optimistic, intelligent, indefatigable, and also full of imagination, a mine of ideas. But one day I found a peculiar object on his desk, a small hollow plastic ball, no larger than a grape, with some powder inside. I was holding it in my hand, you understand, when there was a knock at the door. It was Interpol, eight agents. I had to hire a battery of lawyers to get out of it, to convince them that I was in the dark about the whole thing."

"In the dark about what?"

"The business with the eels. They're not insects, of course, but they do migrate in shoals, thousands and thousands every year. That wretch had made a deal with them—as if I weren't paying him enough. He had corrupted them with a couple of dead grubs, and they would come to shore one by one before starting on their journey to the Sargasso Sea—two grams of heroin each, in those little balls tied to their backs. Once they got there, of course, there was Rick Papaleo's yacht waiting for them. Now, as I was saying, I've been cleared of all suspicion; but the whole thing has become public, and the tax collectors are hounding me. They imagine that I'm making enormous sums of money: they're investigating. The same old story, right? You invent fire, you make a gift of it to mankind, and then a vulture gnaws at your liver for eternity." —PRIMO LEVI

(*Translated, from the Italian, by Raymond Rosenthal.*)

REFLECTIONS

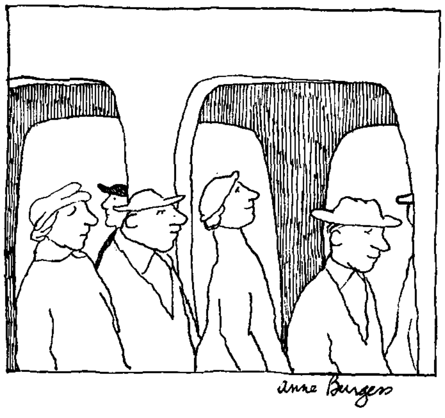
JIM AND TAMMY

ON October 5th last year, a jury in the federal district court in Charlotte, North Carolina, found the televangelist Jim Bakker guilty on twenty-four counts of fraud and conspiracy, the government prosecutors having made their case that Bakker had bilked his followers out of a hundred and fifty-eight million dollars and had taken more than three and a half million dollars for himself out of ministry funds. When the verdict was announced, two television networks interrupted their regular programming to report the news, later showing Jim Bakker walking out of the courthouse and Tammy Faye Bakker in an impromptu press conference singing "On Christ the solid rock I stand." These scenes were, after all, the epilogue to Gospelgate, the long-running drama of Bakker and his fellow-televangelists, which had riveted the country's attention in the spring of 1987, successfully competing for it with the congressional investigation of the Iran-Contra affair.

In Charlotte, as elsewhere in the country, there was a general feeling that justice had been done. Of course, even in Charlotte what most people knew about the Bakkers had less to do with the case than it had to do with what made the Bakkers such perennial favorites with *People* and the *National Enquirer*. Most people, if they were asked about the Bakkers, would report on Tammy's inch-thick makeup and the Christian Disneyland that Bakker had built nearby—the theme park called Heritage USA, with its hundred-and-sixty-three-foot water slide and a fourteen-foot-high fibreglass moose. They would also report on Bakker's "tryst" with the sultry church secretary Jessica Hahn, and the hush money paid to Hahn out of ministry funds. They would talk about Bakker's sexual frolics with male staff members; Tammy's endless shopping trips and the vast sums the Bakkers spent on clothes, jewelry, and houses; the secret suite at the Heritage Grand Hotel, with its gold-plated bathroom fixtures and its fifty-foot walk-in closet; Tammy's air-conditioned doghouse and the wedding ceremony Tammy once held for a poodle and a Yorkshire terrier, complete with bridal gown and tuxedo.

The actual charges against Bakker were pallid by comparison: mail fraud, wire fraud, and conspiracy to commit both. The government's case centered on a money-raising device that Bakker had used for more than three years to support his P.T.L. ministry—the initials standing for either "Praise the Lord" or "People That Love." On television, Bakker had offered "lifetime partnerships" for donations of a thousand dollars or more—partnerships that entitled donors to three free nights' lodging a year at Heritage USA for the rest of their lives. According to the prosecution, Bakker had sold tens of thousands more partnerships than he had promised to sell, and had not built the accommodations he had advertised. By the time of his downfall, in 1987, he had completed only one five-hundred-room hotel; a second hotel stood unfinished, though donors had contributed more than twice the amount of money that was needed to build it; and work on the other lodgings had barely begun. Bakker was in essence running a pyramid scheme. Much of the money from the lifetime partnerships went into the operating expenses of Heritage USA, and Bakker kept three million seven hundred thousand dollars for himself.

The trial was interrupted twice: once by Hurricane Hugo, in September, and once because Bakker suffered a panic attack during which he saw the news reporters outside the courthouse as huge, ferocious bugs. Otherwise, the government's case went smoothly. The federal prosecutors established the facts of the case by calling over ninety witnesses, including Bakker's co-pastor, his finance director, and several of his top aides, and went on to address the question of intent. Bakker, it turned out, had made all the important decisions about the ministry himself, and when he advertised the lifetime partnerships on the air he knew exactly how inaccurate his statements were, for he kept two sets of books. This chicanery, the prosecution showed, was not the only deceit he had practiced on his TV audience: he had once, for example, said that the reproduction of a statue he was offering might be worth a thousand dollars—when he knew that P.T.L. had paid ten dollars for it. On several occasions, Bakker's finance director had told him that the use of partnership money for operating expenses did not constitute "financial integrity," but Bakker had ignored the warnings, and as the ministry sank into debt he concealed its financial plight from his board of directors. Meanwhile, he took larger and larger bonuses for himself and his top aides. To show that Bakker's motive was simply greed, the prosecutors treated the jury to some of the juicier details of the Bakkers' personal expenditures. The ministry had once spent a hundred thousand dollars for a private jet to fly the Bakkers' clothes from North Carolina to California. It had once bought a hundred dollars' worth of cinnamon rolls simply because the Bakkers wanted the smell of them in their room; the rolls were sent away uneaten.



The defense lawyers, for their part, were unable to dispute the facts of the case, and they were unable to place the responsibility for the fraud on Bakker's co-pastor, Richard Dortch, though they had initially claimed they would do that. They nonetheless contended that Bakker was an honest man, who had intended to fulfill all his promises to his partners and would have done so if he had been allowed to continue his ministry. They also contended that everything he did was within his conception of a "faith ministry." While the prosecution had put on the stand a number of Bakker's lifetime partners who claimed that they had been defrauded, the defense put on twenty-seven P.T.L. supporters who testified that they believed in Bakker and felt that the money they had given him was his to dispose of. The defense would have put on a dozen more such people, but the judge, Robert Potter, stopped the procession, on the ground that the supporters were merely serving as character witnesses and their testimony was becoming exceedingly repetitious. Bakker himself thereupon took the stand and described his career in the ministry, his vision for Heritage USA, and the demanding nature of his responsibilities at P.T.L. The defense then rested.

The jurors said later that they had very little trouble reaching their verdict of guilty on all counts. "We kept looking for something from the defense and couldn't find anything," the jury foreman said. Another juror said, "The defense team didn't really offer a defense," and a third said, "I couldn't find anything in the defense to sway me." The jurors had given Bakker's supporters little credence. "We felt like they weren't necessarily lying," one juror explained. "But it was like they were programmed by the defense, because they all said the same thing, one after another. It was like they were brainwashed." And Bakker himself had proved unpersuasive. The foreman said, "The only thing I believed about his testimony was that when he started he was earnest," and another juror concluded, "He had good intentions in the beginning, but along the way he got greedy, got a little power, and he became corrupt. He started using people."

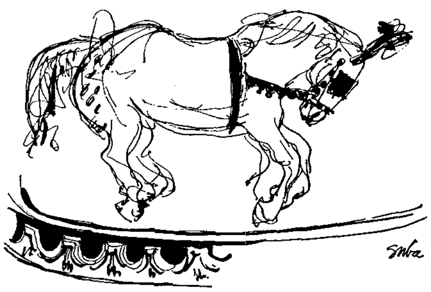
The day after the verdict, the Charlotte *Observer*, which had won a Pulitzer Prize for public service for its reporting on the P.T.L. scandal, ran an editorial expressing satisfaction with the conduct of the trial and its outcome. It said:

> The verdict in the Jim Bakker trial reflects a fundamental distinction in American law. In soliciting donations from his flock, a preacher may promise eternal life in a celestial city whose streets are paved with gold, and that's none of the law's business. But if he promises an annual free stay in a luxury hotel on Earth, he'd better have the rooms available.

The Bakkers, the editorial continued, often depicted themselves as victims of religious persecution, but the trial "had nothing to do with religion." The issue was a real-estate scam, and the judge deserved credit for keeping the trial "sharply focused on the legal issues" and preventing it from becoming the "quasi-religious circus" it might have been, given "the nature of the people involved."

This sounded like an impeccable piece of editorial wisdom, yet the *Observer's* own reporting and that of the New York *Times* indicate that religion did enter into the trial. It was just that no one paid any attention to it. For example, Bakker said that God had told him how to design Heritage USA and had led him to the idea of lifetime partnerships. He also explained his conception of a faith ministry by saying, "You don't decide to build a church because you have money in the bank. You build because God says this is what I should do. Faith is the supplier of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen."

Bakker's supporters also talked about their faith. The *Observer* reported a startling colloquy between a prosecuting attorney and Arnold Santjer, the owner of a ship-loading business in Bradenton, Florida. Santjer, who had been brought on by the defense lawyers, said that he had donated seventy-six thousand dollars to P.T.L. and thus owned seventy-six lifetime partnerships. He had no regrets at all that he would see no return on his money,



HOUSE HOUR

Now the pale honey of a kitchen light
Burns at an upstairs window, the sash a cross.
Milky daylight moon,
Sky scored by phone lines. Houses in rows
Patient as cows.

Dormers and gables of an immigrant street
In a small city, the wind-worn afternoon
Shading into night.

Hundreds of times before
I have felt it in some district
Of shingle and downspout at just this hour.
The renter walking home from the bus
Carrying a crisp bag. Maybe a store
Visible at the corner, neon at dusk.
Macaroni mist on the glass.

Unwilled, seductive as music, brief
As dusk itself, the forgotten mirror
Brushed for dozens of years
By the same gray light, the same shadows
Of soffit and beam end, a reef
Of old snow glowing along the walk.

If I am hollow, or if I am heavy with longing, the same:
The ponderous houses of siding,
Fir framing, horsehair plaster, fired bricks
In a certain light, changing nothing, but touching
Those separate hours of the past
And now at this one time
Of day touching this one, last spokes
Of light silvering the attic dust.

—Robert Pinsky

• •

• •

he said. "The Lord gave me the money to start with," he explained. "It was His in the beginning."

"I don't guess He signed the checks," the prosecutor observed after Santjer made a similar remark during the cross-examination. Later, the prosecutor pointed to a pitcher of water on the table and asked the witness, "If Mr. Bakker told you he could put me in this pitcher, would you believe him?"

"I imagine he could put you in there, yes," Santjer replied.

The jury clearly found this kind of testimony incomprehensible at best. Even the defense lawyers did not protest when the prosecutor mocked Santjer's understanding of what the Lord did for him. Yet Santjer seemed to be proposing a rather better defense for Bakker than the lawyers did: Bakker was not just offering his partners a real-estate deal—he was promising miracles, and that's what his partners were buying. Then, too, if Bakker had been, as he testified, told by God to build Heritage USA and to sell lifetime partnerships, what choice did he have in the matter?

On October 24th, three weeks after the verdict, Judge Potter fined Bakker half a million dollars and sentenced him to forty-five years in jail. "Those of us who do have a religion are sick of being saps for money-grubbing preachers and priests," he said. The sentence was a harsh one. A *Times* editorial pointed out that under federal guidelines that applied to crimes committed after November, 1987, Bakker would have got no more than ten years without parole. Judge Potter, who was generally known around Charlotte as Maximum Bob, had previously explained that he objected to letting white-collar criminals off with light sentences, because they usually cost the taxpayer more money than "the poor devil who robs a bank." The judge had made this statement upon sentencing two of Bakker's close associates to seventeen and eighteen years. It therefore seems likely that Potter felt that pastors who committed white-collar crimes deserved to be judged more harshly than other white-collar criminals.

Outside the courthouse, a cluster of Bakker supporters expressed outrage at the proceedings. "They don't treat murderers like they've treated him," one man said. "I've been to Heritage USA, and I felt like I was in Heaven. You were on holy ground there."

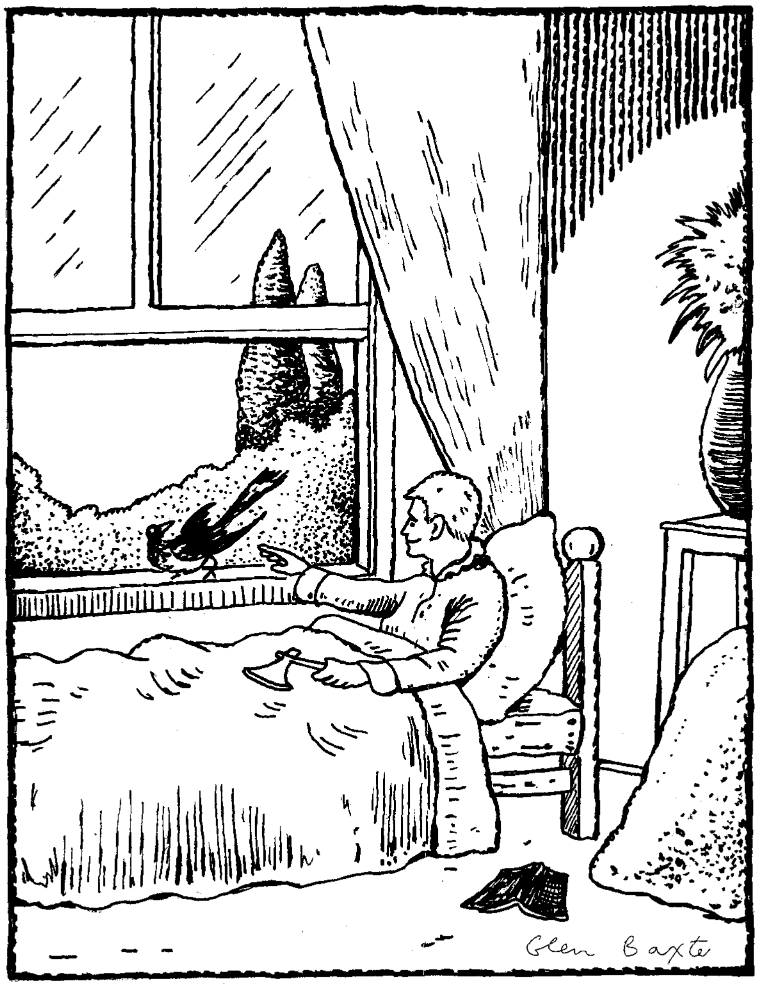
Such sentiments would doubtless not have impressed the judge. Indeed, Potter had immediately remanded Bakker to jail in leg irons, on the ground that hundreds of Bakker's followers had written him letters saying they would do anything to keep Bakker out of prison. "They really have what I would call the Jim Jones mentality," Potter had said when the issue of bail came up on the last day of the trial. "I've seen those people up here. They think he can walk on water."

JUDGE POTTER's remarks would give any defense lawyer some hope of appealing Bakker's sentence on the ground of religious prejudice. Appealing the trial verdict on that ground, however, would be tricky. The Charlotte *Observer* editorial was, after all, correct when it said that Bakker had been tried for lawbreaking, not for the religious content of his preaching. Yet there was something fascinating about those little whiffs of religion which came up through the legal slats, for they seemed to emanate from the real mystery of the whole affair: the bond between Bakker and his followers, and the reason that Bakker was able to raise those many millions of dollars in the first place. That question was never answered while the televangelical scandals played themselves out, in the spring of 1987. In truth, it was not even really addressed, because the journalists who covered the scandals, and also much of the public at large, took virtually the same attitudes that the prosecutors and the judge did during the Bakker trial.

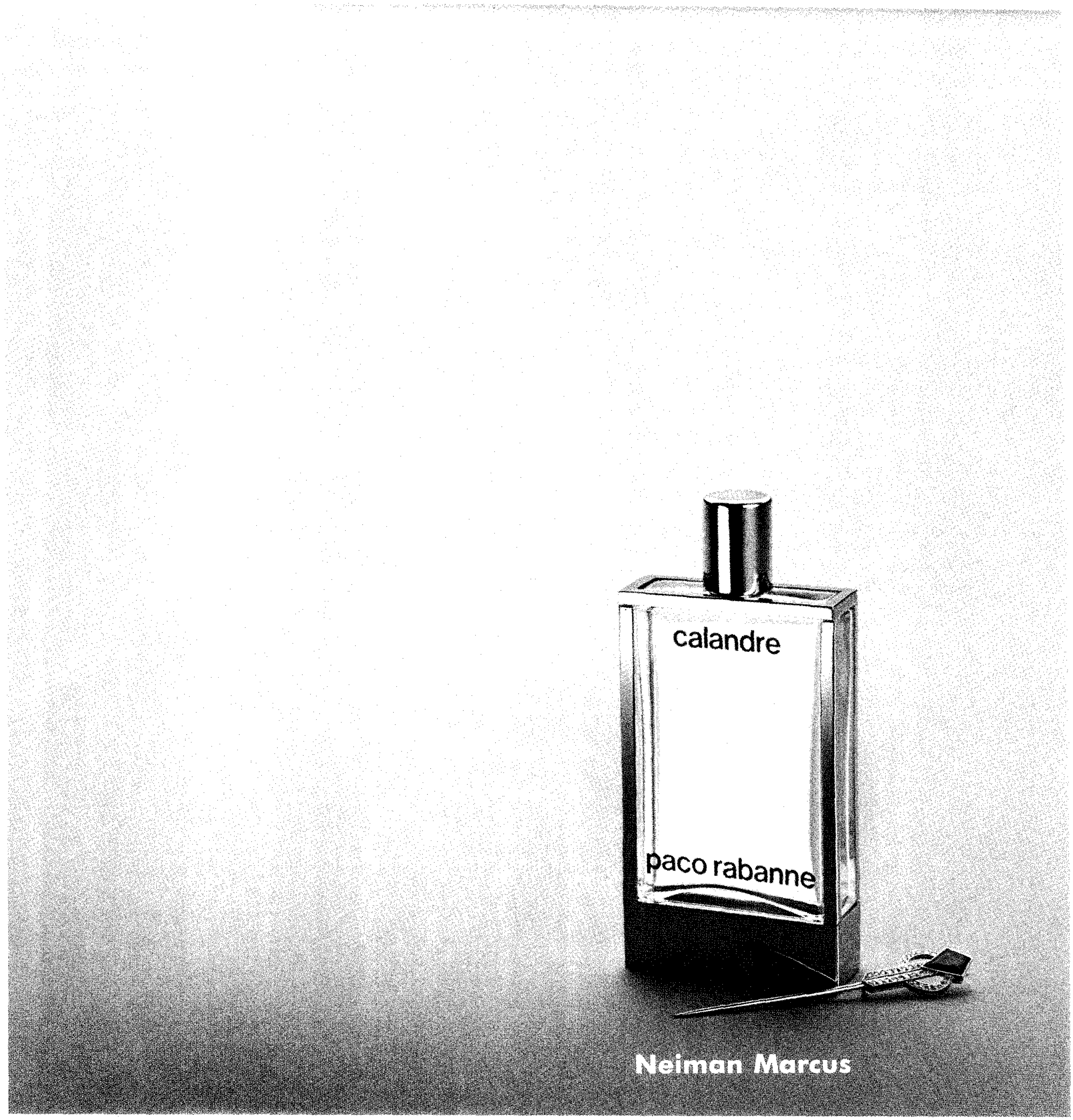
When the *Observer* spoke of the "fundamental distinction" that the law made between sacred and secular concerns, it might as well have been speaking of the convention that journalists adopted with regard to the televangelists: what Bakker, Jerry Falwell, and the others preached was their own business and that of their followers, but what they did with their money was a matter of legitimate public concern. Journalistic objectivity seemed to require such a distinction, yet on "Nightline" and the other television news shows where the scandals were constantly discussed it produced a dialogue of the deaf. Night after night, Ted Koppel hammered on about the vast revenues the telepreachers brought in and the lack of financial accountability, while the preachers spoke of faith, God, and sin. At best, it was a cacophony; at worst, it was something like the colloquy between the prosecutor and Arnold Santjer, for, by refusing to respond to what the preachers were saying, the journalists left the impression that they thought the preachers were hypocrites who had no religion at all.

Then, too, many Americans who watched or read about the telescandals felt about Jim Bakker much as Judge Potter did. An informal poll taken around the country at the time of the trial would have shown that a great many people were angry with the Bakkers. In fact, people seemed to be much more angry with the Bakkers than they were with Leona Helmsley, Ivan Boesky, and all the perpetrators of the savings-and-loan scams combined. When people were asked why they felt so strongly, they would sometimes speak—puzzlingly—about Tammy Faye's makeup and the air-conditioned doghouse. Then they would give what seemed to be the real answer. As a professor of religious studies at the University of North Carolina put it, the Bakkers' antics "seemed to make a mockery of Christianity in general and of the Pentecostal tradition in particular." The issue, then, was religion, not money. But if Bakker made a mockery of religion, what could be said of his supporters? Possibly Judge Potter was alone in his view that they were fanatics, like the followers of Jim Jones. Still, most people's response was to dismiss or marginalize them in one way or another: they were dupes, crazies, backwoods exotics—in any case, people quite unlike us. This kind of response came not just from people who gave little thought to the subject but from scholars as well. Professor Susan Harding, an anthropologist at the University of California, Santa Cruz, who is writing a book on fundamentalism, has pointed out that many, if not most, academic discussions of fundamentalist religion or televangelism in the nineteen-eighties rested on the premise that fundamentalism was a reaction against modernity on the part of the dispossessed, the uneducated, the minority of Americans left behind by the modern world. To theorists of fundamentalism, the donors to a televangelist such as Bakker had to be poor rural folk, elderly women living on Social Security: people outside the mainstream of middle-class American society. How a minority of poor rural folk managed to contribute such huge sums to the telepreachers—the total had risen to a billion five hundred million dollars annually by 1986—was a question that most theorists never bothered to address.

Of course, anyone who actually looked at Bakker's audiences in his high-tech television studios would see hundreds of well-dressed and extremely respectable-looking people of all ages: a cross-section, one might imagine, of the American middle class. Unfortunately, no in-depth study has been made of the half-million people Bakker had on his donors' list. What we do know, however, is that Bakker's supporters came from a wide variety of denominations. About twenty per cent of them seem to have come from Bakker's own Pentecostal denomination, the Assemblies of God; the remaining eighty per cent came from other Pentecostal denominations, from non-Pentecostal Protestant denominations, and from the Catholic Church. We also know that they made P.T.L. one of the three richest media ministries in the nation—the two others being Jimmy Swaggart's and Pat Robertson's—and that well over a hundred thousand of his supporters were able to contribute a thousand dollars apiece in a lump sum for lifetime partnerships. The mystery of



I'LL NEVER FORGET THE DAY I BADE FAREWELL TO MY VEGETARIAN DIET.



Underground classic

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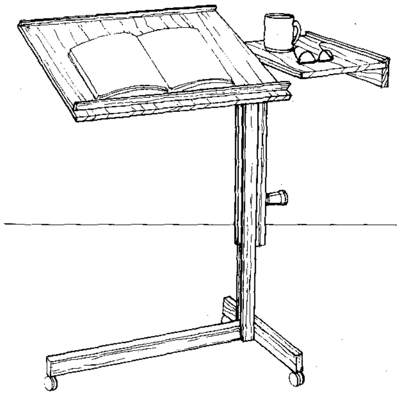
Lay Down Your Arms



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Bakker's following thus runs deeper than Judge Potter or the theorists of fundamentalism imagined.

The one authoritative book on the Bakker ministry, Charles Shepard's "Forgiven: The Rise and Fall of Jim Bakker and the PTL Ministry," does nothing to clear the mystery up. Indeed, it makes it deeper. Shepard, the reporter for the Charlotte *Observer* who broke virtually all the major stories about P.T.L. from 1984 to 1987, does not tell us very much about Bakker's supporters, but in his exhaustive account of the scandals he shows that the financial chicanery at P.T.L. was far more extensive than the court case revealed, and far longer-lived. The financial scandals, in fact, went back at least to the late nineteen-seventies, and many of them were well known to Bakker's supporters, because Shepard and his predecessors at the *Observer* reported them more or less contemporaneously. In 1979, for example, the *Observer* ran a story showing that hundreds of thousands of dollars Bakker had raised for foreign missions never went to the missions. At around the same time, Bakker bought the first of a series of expensive vacation houses. The *Observer* chronicled all his purchases, from a three-hundred-and-ninety-thousand-dollar Florida condo to a six-hundred-thousand-dollar estate in Palm Springs. The *Observer* reporters also wrote year after year about bad management and fiscal irresponsibility at P.T.L.: financial crises, overdue bills, tax problems, and the appalling waste of funds in the construction of Heritage USA. The stories did not deter Bakker's supporters. On the contrary, Bakker sometimes used them to raise money, displaying their headlines on television to demonstrate the hostility of the secular press to his ministry. In 1986, the publisher of the *Observer* wrote in an in-house memo, "PTL's givers—the people our coverage is primarily intended to enlighten—have not shown us in any substantial way that they appreciate our revelations. Rather, they seem to endorse the show biz life-styles of the Bakkers and to admire the creation of Heritage USA."

Shepard does not attempt to account for the givers' reaction. But then his book is an investigation of the P.T.L. scandals, and not a cultural analysis. Of all the commentators on the Bakkers, only Dave Barry, the witty syndicated newspaper columnist, had a plausible explanation.

Barry loved "The Jim and Tammy Show." In a special issue of *People* commemorating the nineteen-eighties —an issue that went to press before the trial ended—Barry wrote of the Bakkers, "My wife, who is actually a religious person, would . . . say, 'How can you *stand* them?' " He went on:

> *Stand* them? I *loved* them. I loved their looks; I loved their banter; I loved their melodramatic pitches for money; I loved their water slide. I loved the time in 1987 when they were celebrating Jim's birthday on the show, and Tammy, barely able to contain herself, announced that, for his very special present, she was giving him—a pair of giraffes.

The most amazing thing about that episode, Barry wrote, was the reaction of the members of the studio audience:

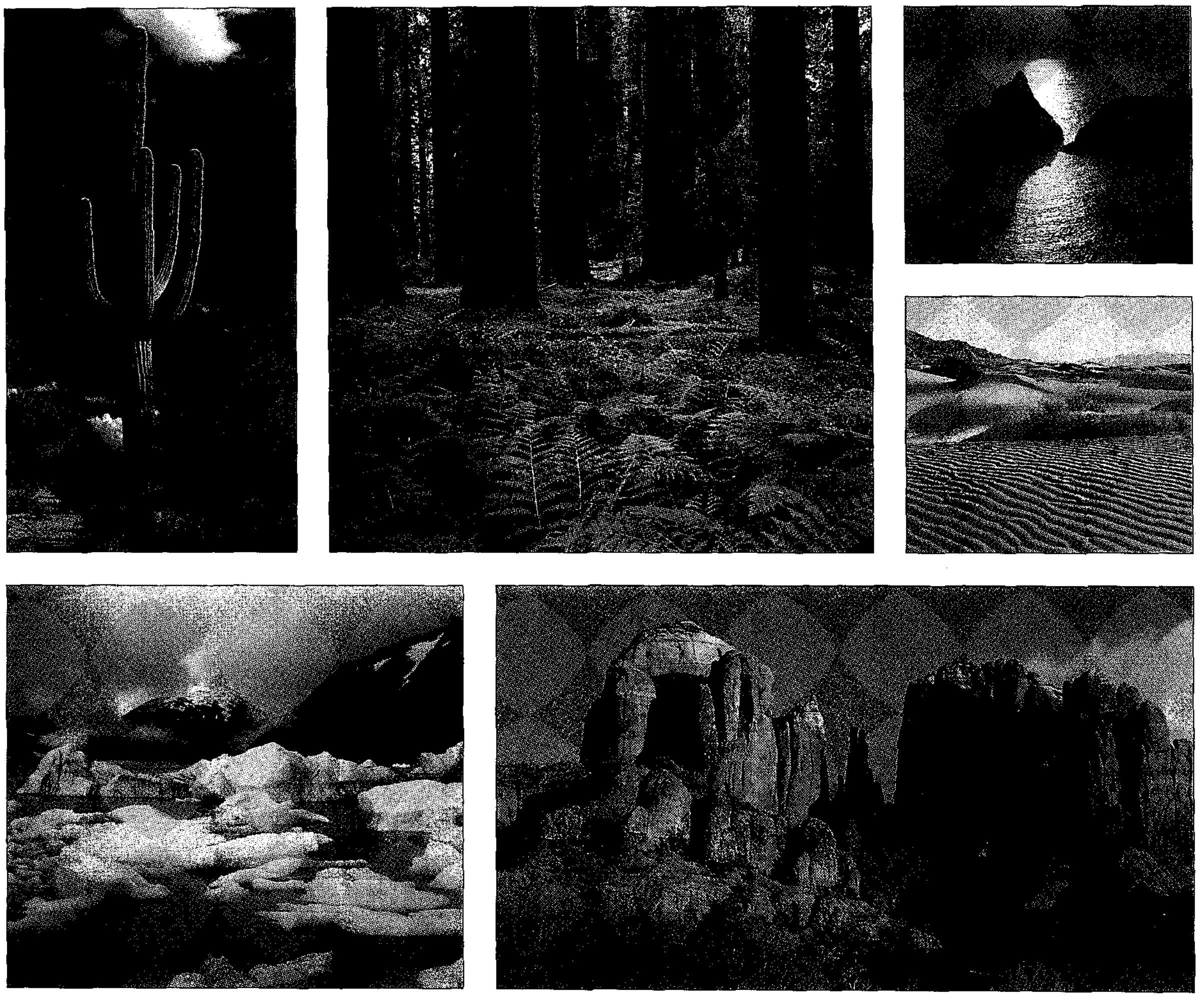
> They did not leap to their feet and shout, "Wait a minute here. Are you saying that you're going to take our hard-earned money, which you obtained from us for the ostensible purpose of operating a Christian ministry engaged in doing the Lord's work, and you're going to spend this money on *giraffes*?" No sir, the audience reacted as though Tammy had just announced an end to world hunger. They applauded like maniacs. Giraffes! What a cute idea! That Tammy Faye!

Barry rejected the idea that the Bakkers' devotees were a bunch of morons, as so many people seemed to think: no, they were just like everyone else. The success of the Bakkers rested upon the fact that "they personalized a very appealing, very convenient moral philosophy that flourished in the '80s, a philosophy that can be summarized as follows: You can't do good unto others unless you feel good about yourself, and you can't feel good about yourself unless you have a lot of neat stuff."

Barry's article suggests a better defense for Jim Bakker than the one he actually got. Bakker—so the argument would go—could not be accused of committing fraud, for everything he did was more or less in plain sight. In full view of his television audience, he preached a new religion—or a new form of Christianity—based on faith in financial miracles and in a Heaven here on earth with a water slide and luxury hotels. It was a religion of celebrity and showmanship and fun, which made a mockery of all puritanical standards and all canons of good taste. Its standard was excess, and its doctrines were tolerance and freedom from accountability. It was a religion so remarkably in tune with its times that it

EARTH DAY

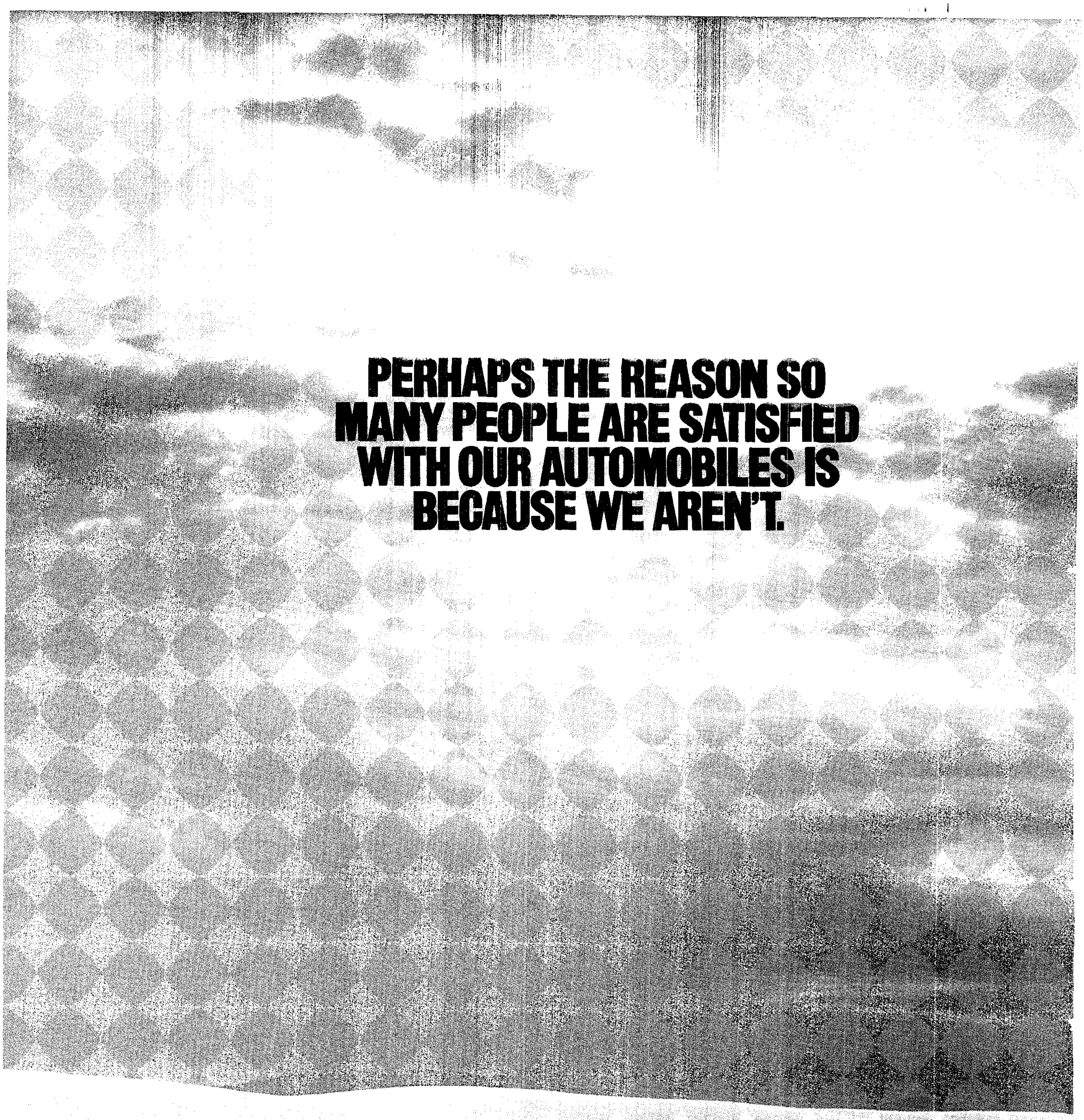
Honoring the Environment



© M. Sutton, Ron Thomas, E. Nagele, David Noble, G. Rowell, D. Davis (clockwise from upper left)/FPG

We at The New Yorker *are especially pleased to present the following special advertising section, dedicated to Earth Day. In keeping with the event it commemorates and with* The New Yorker*'s long-standing association with environmental concerns, this section has been printed on one-hundred-per-cent recycled Georgia-Pacific paper.*

— Steven T. Florio, Publisher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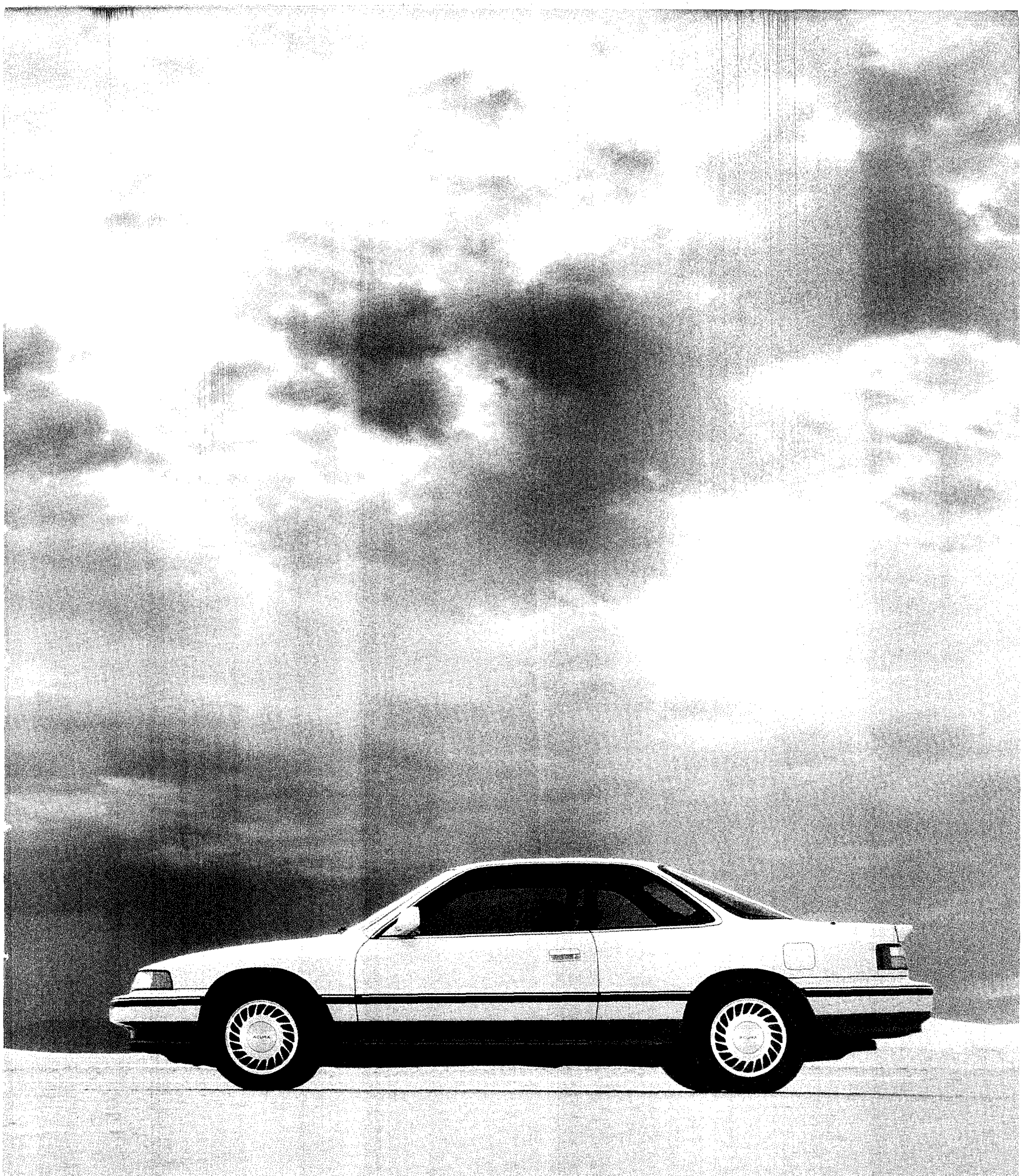

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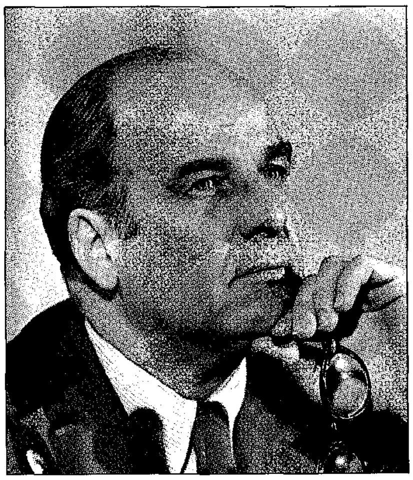
There were huge demonstrations in major American cities, and smaller displays of concern in villages and hamlets across the country. More than twenty million people participated. Not that the civic demonstrations drove out the academic ones; even with the shift in emphasis, some fifteen hundred college campuses and as many as ten thousand schools participated that day, holding seminars and teach-ins, planting trees, and learning about the intricate food chain that binds together life on this planet. And the word "ecology" passed into common parlance on April 22, 1970.

So the first Earth Day came and went.



Senator Gaylord Nelson in 1970

UPI/Bettmann Newsphotos

Where or when humans began to embrace nature beyond the bottom lines of their economies and the pearly gates of their anthropocentric religions is anyone's guess. Most scholars take the question into tricornered-hat times and answer it there within the literary and artistic traditions of the Romantic movement. We hear of the influence of the English lake poets, of Wordsworth and Coleridge and Shelley and Blake. We hear of their influence on the American writers James Fenimore Cooper and William Cullen Bryant; of Washington Irving and Ralph Emerson; of Henry David Thoreau, who would understand why "a town is saved, not more by the righteous men in it than by the woods and swamps that surround it," and how it could possibly be — in defiance of centuries of civilized thought — that "in wildness is the preservation of the world."

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Forestry researchers** (top) **and environmental demonstrators** (bottom) **are working toward a cleaner planet

> ***"When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe."***
>
> ***— John Muir***

PARROTS
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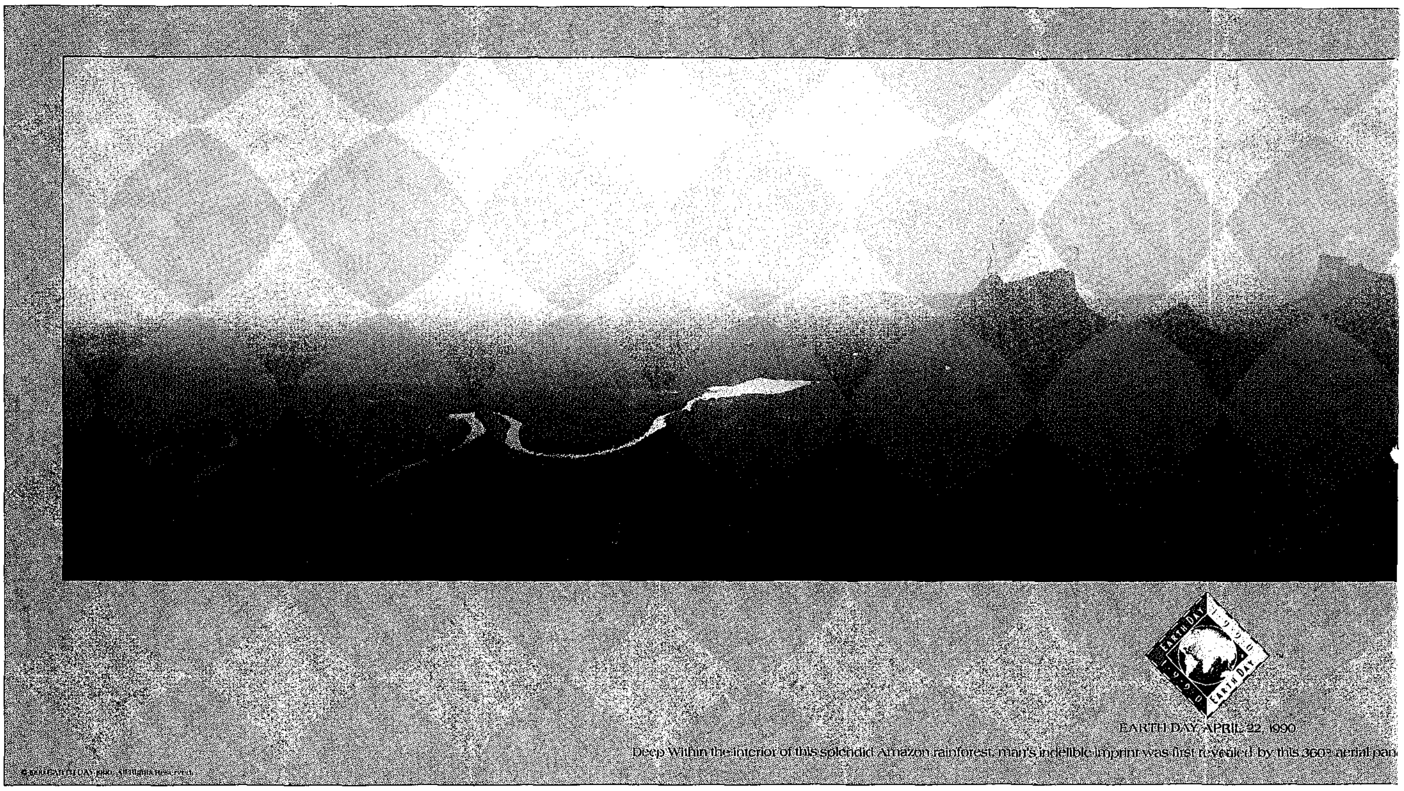
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One of Earth Day 1990's promotional posters

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The Corps was known as FDR's ''tree army''

> ***''In wildness is the preservation of the world.''***
> ***— Henry David Thoreau***

In 1864, Abraham Lincoln's former ambassador, George Perkins Marsh, had just completed a manuscript that would soon be published in America as *Man and Nature*: ''The earth,'' he wrote, ''is fast becoming an unfit home for its noblest inhabitant.'' Social historian Lewis Mumford would later proclaim *Man and Nature* to be the ''fountainhead'' of the conservation movement.

The practice of conservation began to overtake the theory of it in the American forest at the end of the nineteenth century. Much has been made of the split then between the movement's two most influential figures, Gifford Pinchot and John Muir, and probably with good reason. The two of them inspired a dichotomy that runs within the movement even today. Latter-day Pinchotians are occasionally described as ''true conservationists'' who encourage ''the greatest good for the greatest number in the long run.'' The disciples of Muir are labeled as ''preservationists,'' following his belief in the supremacy of ecological connections. ''When we try to pick out anything by itself,'' said Muir, ''we find it hitched to everything else in the universe.''

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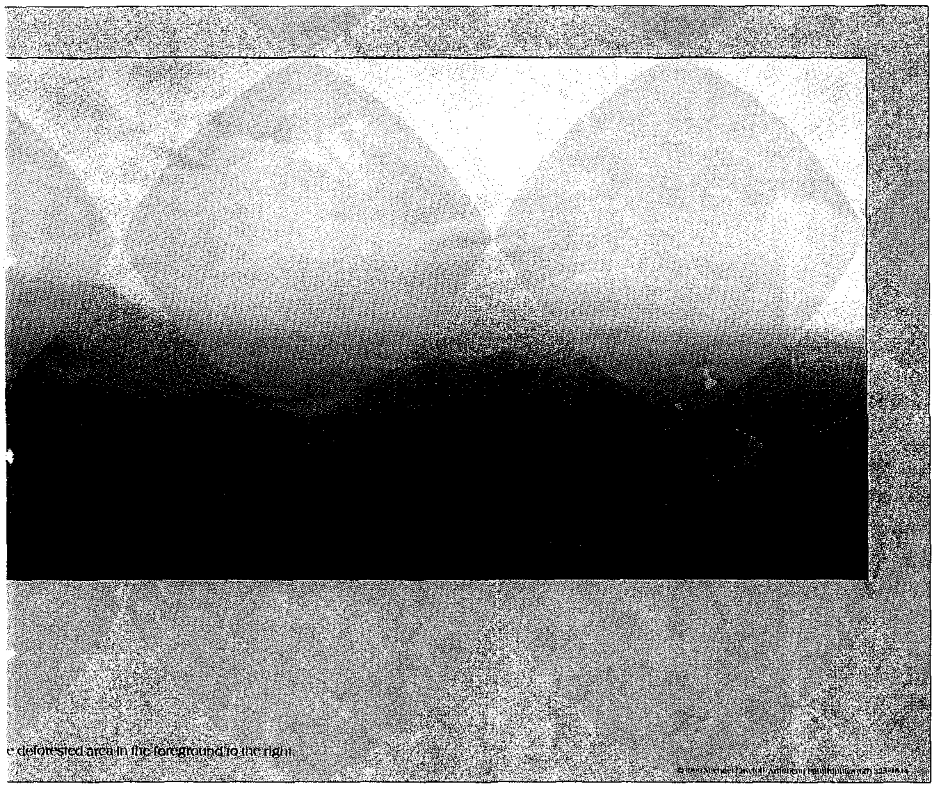
Teddy Roosevelt

Until an assassin's bullet put Theodore Roosevelt into William McKinley's chair at the White House, the Muirs, even the Pinchots, of America had scant access to the corridors of power in Washington, D.C.



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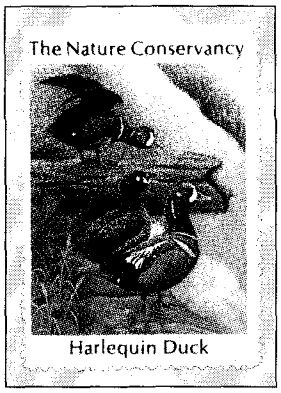

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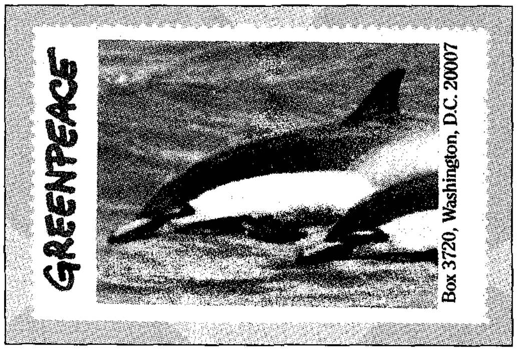
Environmental groups have many ways to get the message across



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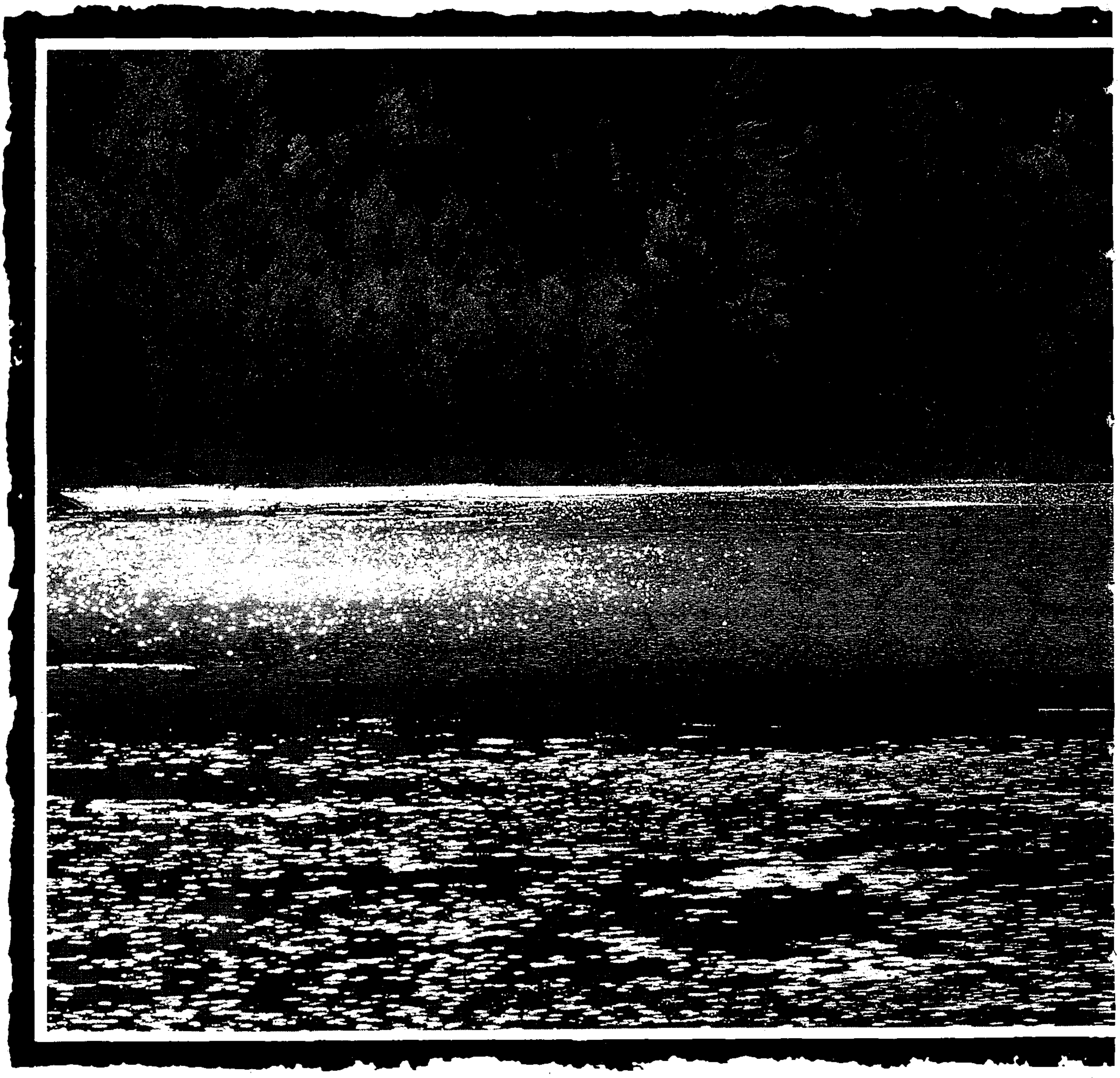
But Roosevelt changed all that. In his first message to Congress, he declared forest and water issues to be "the most vital internal questions of the United States at the present time." He created thirteen new forest reserves in his first year in office, established the nation's premiere wildlife sanctuaries, and, without embracing all of Pinchot's utilitarian views, installed the forester as his top resource strategist.

© Len Rue Jr./PPG

Saved from extinction

The next President to align himself fully with the conservationists was TR's relative, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who was decidedly of the Pinchot school. True, he was passionate about trees, but for the most part he believed that resources were to be conserved or developed for human consumption. Forest restockings, flood control, soil stabilization — these were the planks of FDR's conservation platform. Perhaps his greatest triumph would be the Civilian Conservation Corps, three million jobless young men put to work replanting the forests and improving the public lands. But the purists had reason to cheer as well — they cheered Harold Ickes.

Ickes was chosen as FDR's Interior Secretary, and soon showed his purity in the management of those "sentimental" national parks. As to what he felt a national park should be, Ickes said: "I want as much wilderness . . . as possible."



In A Changing World Some Things Deserve To Remain Just The Way They Are.

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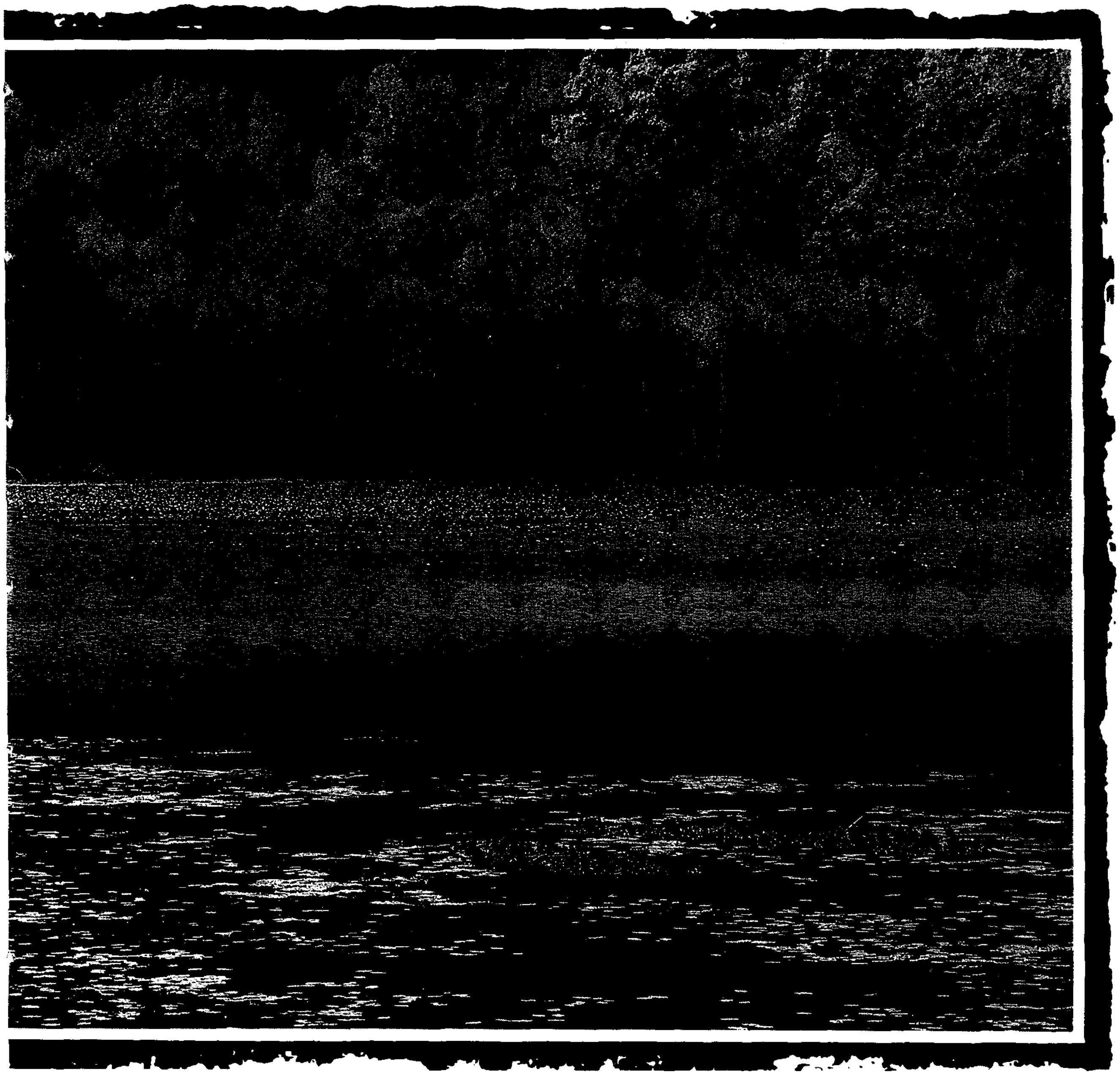

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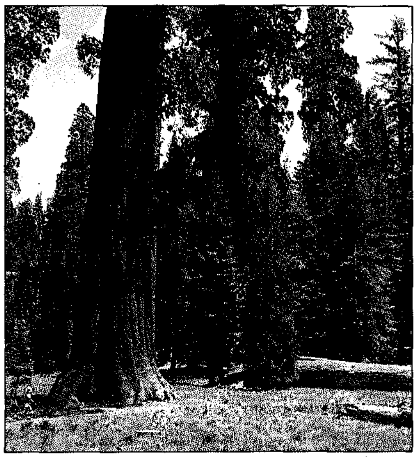
Wilderness as a goal of national policy was an unfamiliar idea in Ickes's day. Apart from the experiment in New York that evolved into the "forever wild" Adirondack Forest Preserve, the concept of setting aside large roadless areas to be held forever wild was pretty much limited to a few revolutionary thinkers in the U.S. Forest Service. At the Forest Service, the principal wilderness advocates were Aldo Leopold and Bob Marshall. In 1935 they conspired to create a new institutional voice that would be known as the Wilderness Society. There was some discussion as to what sort of people might be encouraged to join. "We want no straddlers," said Bob Marshall.

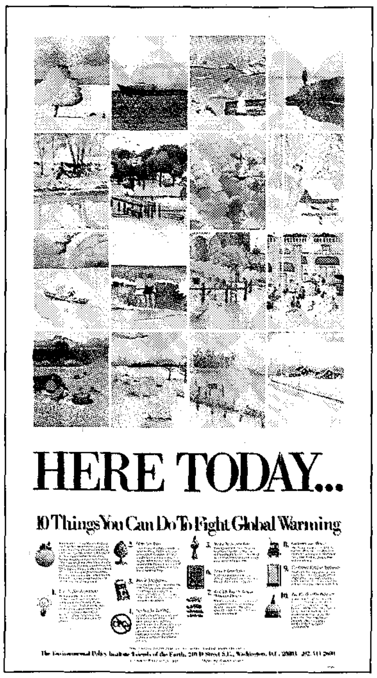


America's natural beauty has been preserved in Yosemite National Park

Now the conservation movement was on the march, and it was travelling on the energy of its own message. No other popular movement save the universal quest for freedom has been better served by men and women with a flair for words — and pictures, one must add nowadays. Thoreau in his swamps, Muir (founder of the Sierra Club) and his mountains, Marshall and his wilderness — all of them had the talent to write and be published and reach out to awaken the people. The effect has been cumulative, but for volume and clarity, the greatest awakening occurred in the quarter century between the end of World War II and the dawn of the first Earth Day. And, very possibly, two pivotal years in that period were 1948 and 1962.

Nineteen-forty-eight. Aldo Leopold, the wilderness forester, died fighting a fire at his farm. But a collection of his essays, *A Sand County Almanac*, published by Oxford University Press the following year, would go on to sell more than a million copies, preaching the need for a new ethic in which land would be recognized not as a commodity, but as a community.

Nineteen-sixty-two. David Brower was celebrating his tenth anniversary as Sierra Club's executive director and editor with a publishing coup. It was a photographic celebration, by Eliot Porter, of Thoreau's New England backcountry, with selections from his writings and a title lifted straight from his most memorable line: *In Wildness Is the Preservation of the World.* The book was beautiful enough to put a lump in the most unsentimental of throats. But perhaps a more important reason to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"The history of life on earth is a history of the interaction of living things and their surroundings." — Rachel Carson in **Silent Spring**

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Some Events Scheduled for Earth Day 1990

A massive rally headlined by Hollywood stars is planned for the Mall in Washington, D.C.

Portland, Oregon, has scheduled a parade of garbage trucks to dramatize the problem of municipal waste.

Students at San Jose State University are expected to dig up a V-8 "gas guzzler" that was buried there on the first Earth Day and "recycle" it.

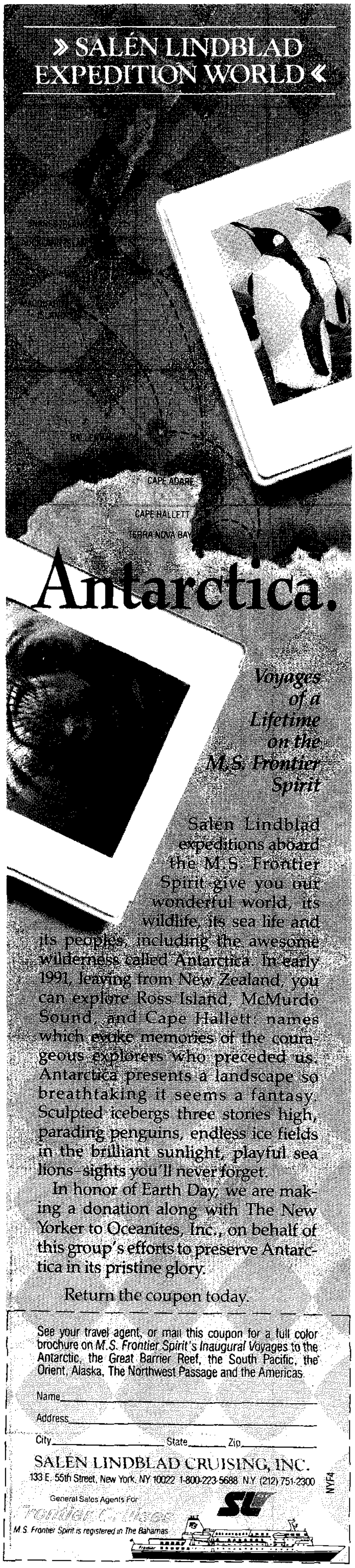
Elementary schoolchildren in Flagstaff, Arizona, plan to plant twelve thousand native trees and shrubs.

Citizens of Oxford, Mississippi, are hoping their lobbying effort will have succeeded in making their city the first Styrofoam-free zone in America.

An ecology fair is planned for Roger Williams Park in Providence, Rhode Island.

The first Environmental Film Festival, presided over by Robert Redford, is slated to open in Colorado Springs, Colorado, later that week.

And if the logistics work out, a team of climbers from the U.S., the U.S.S.R., and China will be atop Mount Everest, picking up some of the litter left there by previous expeditions.



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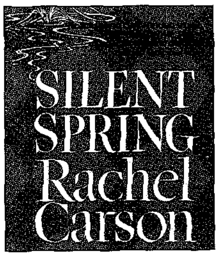
The Florida Everglades have been rescued more than once

> *"... the fate of the living planet is the most important issue facing mankind." — Gaylord Nelson*

remember 1962 would be Rachel Carson and her mind-bending book, *Silent Spring*. The subject was pollution-by-pesticides, emphasis on DDT. Carson, a biologist with a great gift for language, had at first hoped to interest a better-known writer to take up the pen against pesticides. She wrote to E. B. White at *The New Yorker*. White had been issuing occasional bulletins assailing the plunder of America's resources, but declined her invitation to tackle the more scientifically complex topic of chemical pollution. White replied to Carson: Why don't you do it? She did.



In the decade after *Silent Spring*, a slew of strong environmental books was published, and none too soon. There would be one peril after another. The engineer-induced parching of the Everglades. The ecological threat of a trans-Alaska oil pipeline. The siting of nuclear plants. The parkland intrusions of the interstate highway system. The clearcutting of our national forests. The choking congestion of our cities. The swirl of sewage in our streams.

It was time for Earth Day.

While it should be abundantly clear that environmentalism did not arrive newborn in America at sunup on the twenty-second day of April twenty years ago, it must have been just as evident that, after sundown, the movement could never be the same again. The spirit of that day had swept up whole regiments of raw recruits, and before long would be effecting prodigious change in the laws of the land, the conduct of government, the attitude of industry, the opinions of the people, and the structure of the movement itself.

Possibly the most visible changes appeared on the national statute books as congressional leaders rushed to fill in some missing pages. First there was NEPA — the National Environmental Policy Act, which was signed into law just weeks before Earth Day, requiring environmental review and analysis of public projects. Nineteen-seventy would also see passage of a new and tough Clean Air Act. And then the lawmakers of Capitol Hill were off and running through the seventies and into the eighties, putting into effect hundreds of federal and state initiatives to clean up and protect the nation's air, land, and water resources.

There were other gains made in the 1970s: Everglades National Park was saved from destruction-by-jetport, polluters in the Gulf of Mexico were being caught, a master plan to put federal recreation areas into the nation's most park-starved cities was created, a number of marine mammals were placed on the endangered species list, and the Environmental Protection Agency was created. One lasting contribution of the late 1970s was the resolution of the national interest lands question in Alaska, an initiative that added millions of acres to our parks and refuge systems.

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There is near unanimous agreement among the leaders of the environmental movement in America

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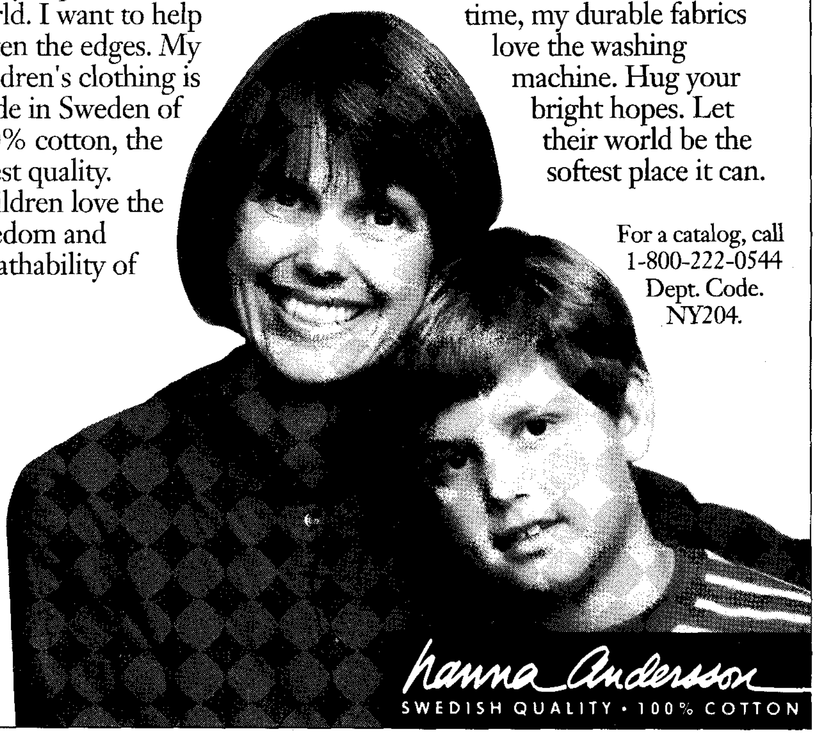

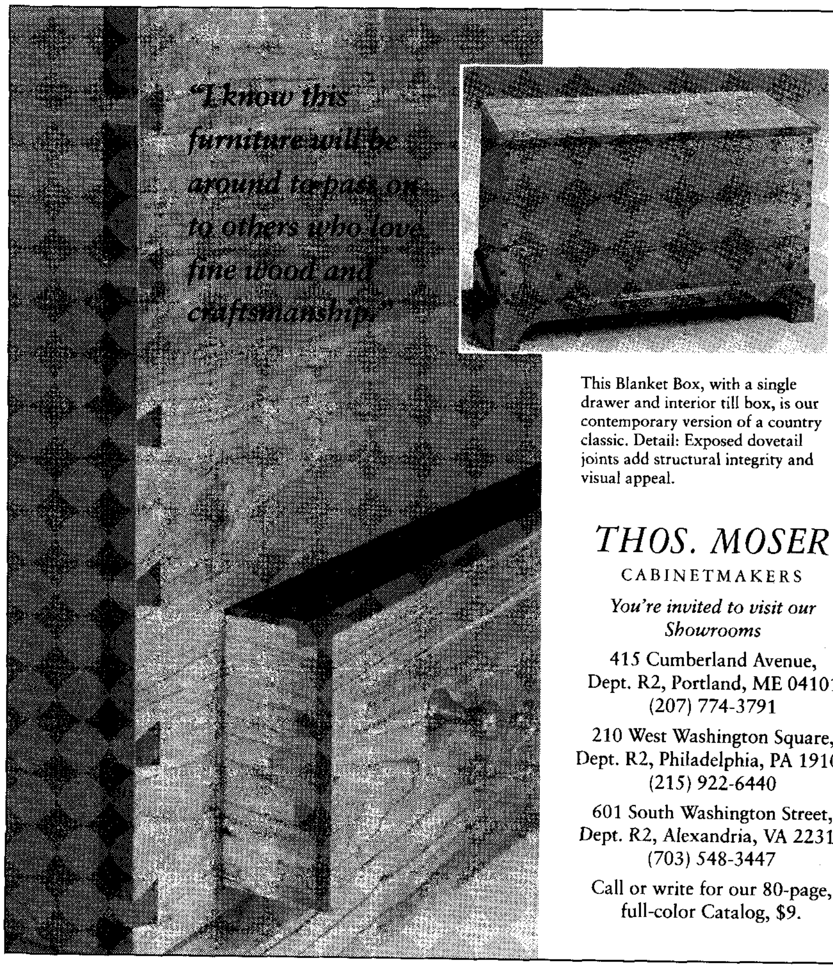
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Denis Hayes

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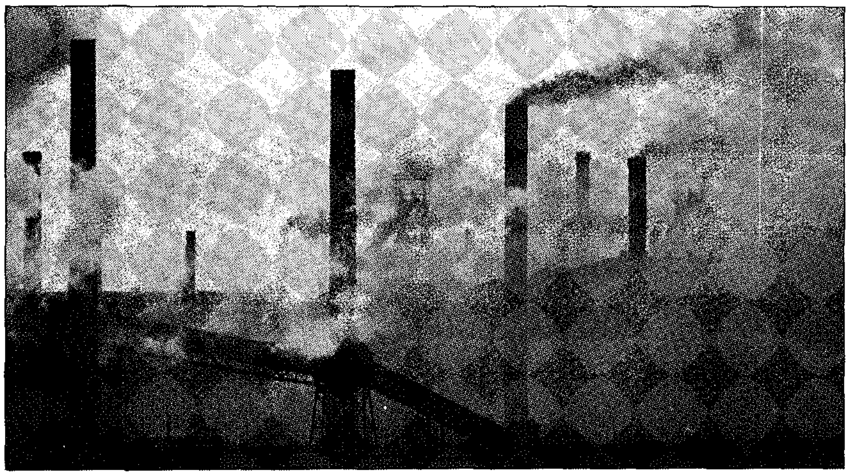
today that, since April 22, 1970, the cause has been losing ground; that many of the gains of the seventies were offset by the reversals of the eighties, and that only a colossal change in human behavior can turn it around. That's how Denis Hayes — the coördinator of the first Earth Day and chairman of Earth Day 1990 — sees it now. "I think we're losing the war," he told an interviewer from the Natural Resources Defense Council. "By any number of criteria that you can apply to the sustainability of the planet, we are in vastly worse shape than we were in 1970, despite twenty years of heroic effort."

The measurements of success and failure are not as absolute as one might wish, however, and vary from source to source. Nevertheless, it is generally conceded that a few pollutants have been substantially reduced over the past two decades — chiefly lead and particulates in the air, and fecal coliform in the water. Perhaps it is remarkable that any progress was made whatsoever, especially in view of the nation's growth in the past twenty years — a quadrupling gross national product (though not discounted for inflation) and a twenty-five per cent increase in the population.



Air pollution is one of the problems

© J. Zimmerman/FPG

The failures, of course, are even harder to measure than the gains, and some may in fact be immeasurable. Air pollution control programs and technologies in some cases have lessened lung damage immediately downwind of the emission sources, but these remedies have largely failed to stop acid rain and other forms of toxic precipitation. Water programs have focussed on cleaning up lakes and rivers while septic systems and municipal landfills leached their filth into the nation's groundwater resources.

And finally there is the degradation of the global environment. Right now, the most alarming element internationally is carbon dioxide, a by-product of the combustion of fossil fuels. Scientists have been assessing the buildup of carbon dioxide in the upper atmosphere since before the first Earth Day, and almost every calculation has pointed to the inevitability of the "greenhouse effect" — the gases acting like a roof of glass, letting sunlight through but not letting radiant heat out. Then there is the problem of chlorofluorocarbons, or CFCs, those coolants used in air conditioners and refrigerators. CFCs are said to be punching holes in the stratospheric layer of ozone that shields life on this planet from too much solar ultraviolet radiation, which causes skin cancer. There is an international treaty, to which the U.S. is a signatory, calling for reduction of CFCs, and talk of a treaty to address the surfeit of carbon dioxide in the greenhouse.

So now on to Earth Day, again. This time it's going to be a global effort, with more than eight hundred and fifty affiliated corporations, nonprofit organizations, and educational institutions working to get individuals, governments, and corporations to make a long-term investment in the environment. Whether it's a city offering free public transportation or a festival on the Mall in Washington, D.C., events relating to the environment will be taking place just about everywhere on April 22, 1990, and during "Earth Week," which begins on April 16th.

When all the parties, parades, and preachments are over on April 23rd, there will still be lots to do. Earth Day organizers hope that all participants will take the Green Pledge, a promise to honor the environment by voting, purchasing, consuming, investing, and restyling their lives in an ecologically sound way. Earth Day also marks the start of the "Green Decade," a decade dedicated to establishing an international commission on environmental policy, to banning the use of chlorofluorocarbons within the next five years, to increasing protection of endangered species, to slowing the rate of global warming, and to the implementation of recycling programs. Individuals who want to become involved can check local newspapers to find out about events in their own communities, or call Earth Day 1990 or Earth Day 20, the two main organizations behind Earth Day. □

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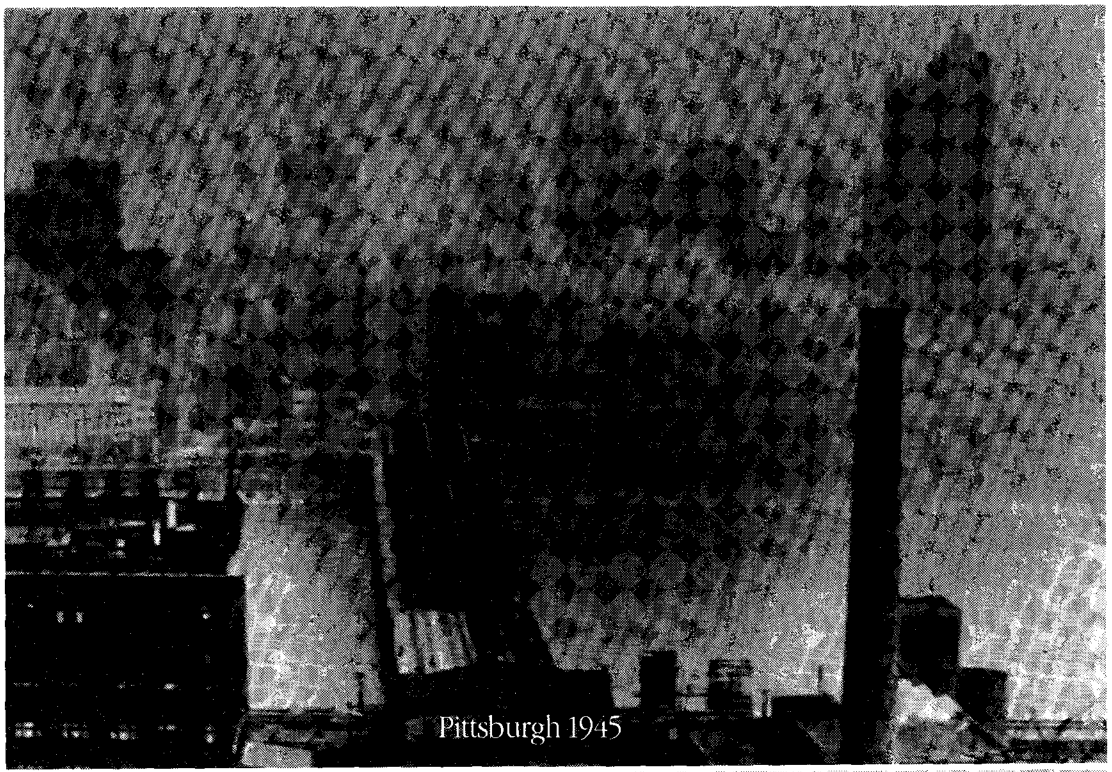
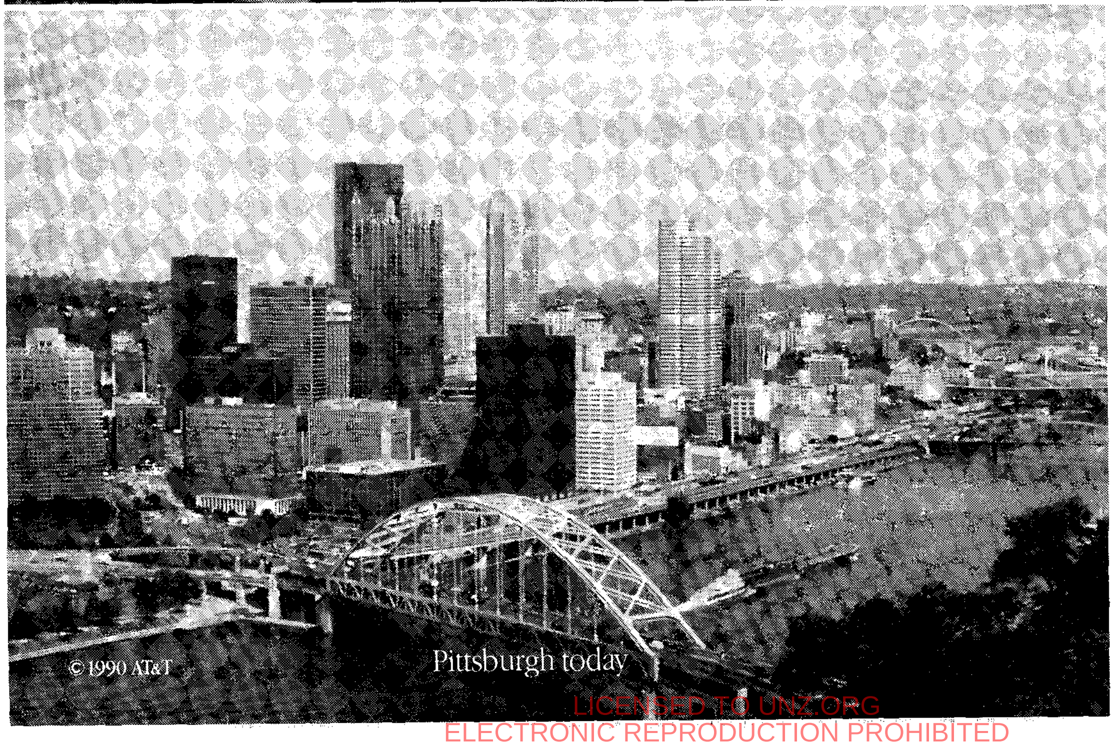


Pittsburgh 1945



Pittsburgh today

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flourished at the very center of the society, uncensured and unquestioned, for a full decade. Some of its adherents now complained about having been deceived, but that was merely out of embarrassment at having subscribed to its fundamental antinomianism.

Possibly such an argument would not stand up in court. Still, there is a good deal of evidence to support it. For one thing, it may afford the only explanation of the strange dénouement of the Bakker affair. According to Shepard, agencies of the federal government had been investigating the Bakker organization since 1979, but though they had ample evidence of financial misconduct, involving millions of dollars, they did not litigate until after the Bakkers were forced out of P.T.L., in the spring of 1987. What brought the Bakkers down was not any secular authority—it was not even the Charlotte *Observer*—but, rather, a rival evangelist, Jimmy Swaggart, who accused Bakker of preaching a false religion. The trip wire was the Jessica Hahn affair, but the Hahn story did not come out in the *Observer* or anywhere else until after Bakker left P.T.L. What happened was that Bakker, who knew that Swaggart had heard the story, and believed that Swaggart would use it to destroy him, resigned from P.T.L. of his own accord, in the hope of quieting the scandal. To save P.T.L. from Swaggart, he appointed Jerry Falwell the chairman of P.T.L., apparently hoping that Falwell, a fundamentalist Baptist, would keep his distance from a Pentecostal ministry. Instead, Falwell went right to the P.T.L. account books, exposed the corruption at P.T.L.—and, in addition, Bakker's homosexual activity—and so prevented Bakker from returning to his ministry. Whatever Falwell's personal motives were, he meted out the justice of his own puritanical religion.

JOSEPH FARRIS

"What do you say, Dad—want to hack a few?"

• •

Moreover, what might be called the Barry Defense takes on a new dimension of meaning if what Bakker preached and what he created are understood in terms of the Pentecostal tradition. In the first place, Pentecostalists, like most born-again Christians, understand religion differently from the way most liberal Christians do. For them, religion encompasses the whole of life; rather than being quarantined in a separate sphere, it permeates the world and saturates everything from the workings of nature to the smallest of human decisions. When Arnold Santjer said that God gave him his money (and could, if He wanted, put the prosecutor in a pitcher), he was merely expressing the conventional Pentecostal understanding of God's immanence and His power to intervene in the world. Secondly, Pentecostalism, like fundamentalism, certainly began as a reaction against many aspects of modernity, but in Bakker's lifetime it became much less of a counterculture —in the sense of being a critique of mainstream values and ways of life. Bakker himself gave it a big push toward the center, and in the view of many Pentecostalists he pushed it so far that it became nothing more than an imitation of the world as it was. From the Pentecostal perspective, there is a good deal of evidence for this both in Bakker's preaching and in the iconography of Heritage USA. In an essay on the born-again telescandals, Professor Harding provides the framework for such an interpretation.

Take the water slide, for example. Any stranger to the religious world from which the Bakkers came would on visiting Heritage USA have seen only a water slide—an extraordinary one, to be sure, but a water slide pure and simple. Within the Pentecostal tradition, however, falling water is associated with the baptism of the Holy Ghost and with the gifts of the Spirit that rained down upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost. In Palestine, the physical rains come in the fall and in the spring; Pentecostals call the Pentecost "the early rain," which planted the church, and call themselves "the latter rain," which brings the harvest that is the return of Christ to earth. Pentecostal churches, if they are affluent enough, tend to have some flowing water about them as a matter of décor. Oral Roberts University, in Tulsa, has fountains and decorative pools laid out in straight lines along the avenues of approach to the central buildings. Jimmy Swaggart's television ministry and Bible college, in Baton Rouge, has a series of indoor fountains. The flowing water is welcome in the heat of Tulsa and Baton Rouge, and the very abundance of it in both complexes not only demonstrates the wealth of the ministries but also symbolizes the abundance of the Holy Spirit around them. But Jim Bakker's water park, with its slide and its acres of swimming pools, surely contained more water than all the Roberts and Swaggart pools put together. Then, too, the interesting thing about it was that the water came not in the form of a traditional water garden with shallow rectangular pools but in the form of a

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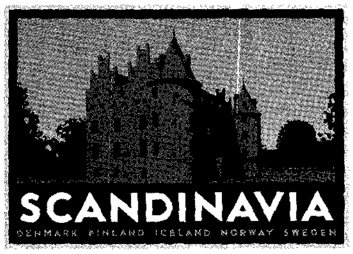
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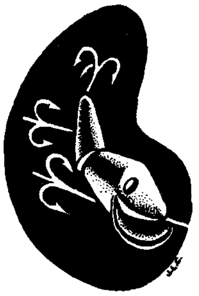
huge asymmetrical park whose pools were designed for swimming—for the pleasures of the body—and whose slide and sluiceways were designed for thrills. The message of this was surely not lost on most of the life partners of Heritage USA.

The message was certainly not lost on Jerry Falwell. Some months after he had assumed control of P.T.L., he found it politically necessary to take a plunge down the water slide himself. A memorable photograph of the occasion shows him lying on the chute a few feet from the top and a few seconds after he has let go. He is wearing what he always wears in public—a black Baptist suit—and his arms are folded over his chest in the manner of a corpse in an open coffin. He is clearly not enjoying himself. In fact, the photograph suggests that he is doing this over his own dead body. Now, Jerry Falwell the man likes swimming as much as the next person; indeed, he has a swimming pool at his house. But the fundamentalist Baptist was plunging into a Pentecostal pool, and it is precisely the waters of the Holy Ghost that separate the Pentecostalists most distinctly from their cousins the parchy-dry fundamentalists. So Falwell had to show that he did not enjoy the plunge. The photograph captures the essential contradiction that he was caught in when he agreed to take charge of Heritage USA—and the reason that he eventually failed to make a go of it.

THE rich metaphor of the water slide, which Falwell, as it were, fell into, suggests the kind of sensibility at work in Andy Warhol's Campbell's Soup cans and multiple silk-screen images of Jacqueline Kennedy and Marilyn Monroe. But, it could be argued, Bakker's was the richer art, for while Warhol was playing with the conventional boundaries between art and commerce, art and life, the medium and the message, Bakker was playing more dangerous games. In his television shows and in what journalists called his theme park, he was playing with the boundaries of the sacred and the profane, good and evil, Heaven and Hell: now you see it, now you don't. To speak of fraud in such a context might be to make the same kind of category mistake that philistines would make looking at a Warhol construction labelled "Campbell's." Was there soup in it? Of course not; there was art. But it is necessary to know a bit about fundamentalist and Pentecostal culture in order to see this.

As Harding points out in her essay, the fundamentalist and Pentecostal movements began more or less independently—the first toward the end of the nineteenth century, and the second a decade or so later. The fundamentalist movement was an explicit protest against the secularization of society and what its leaders saw as the apostasy of the Protestant churches in their teaching of the new Biblical scholarship and the Social Gospel. Rooted in the Calvinist Baptist tradition, it emphasized scriptural inerrancy, the inherent depravity of human nature, and the imminence of the apocalyptic end times. Pentecostalism, by contrast, came from the Wesleyan Methodist tradition, with its greater optimism about human nature and its more enthusiastic forms of worship. Its most distinctive feature was its doctrine that all the elements of the New Testament ministry remain potentially in the world today, including the supernatural gifts, or charismata, of prophecy, miraculous healing, the exorcism of demons, and speaking in tongues. For fundamentalists the Bible is the sole source of authority; Pentecostalists have in addition a "talking God," who speaks through human beings to the world. While fundamentalists look to the sacrificial death of Christ and the Resurrection, Pentecostalists look not only to Easter but beyond it to the day when the Holy Spirit came to the apostles, imbuing them with power and filling Jerusalem with "signs and wonders." Yet, for all their differences, fundamentalism and Pentecostalism had—and continue to have—a good deal of common ground, notably in their insistence on the principle of scriptural inerrancy. Historically, at least, both were world-rejecting movements: they insisted on the separation of the saved from the world—and from such worldly pleasures as makeup and social dancing—in preparation for the end times. Historically, both flourished among the poor and in the least developed sections of the country.



Jim and Tammy Bakker grew up in a Pentecostal world, and in many ways the history of the Bakker family recapitulates that of Pentecostalism through this century. Jim's family lived in Muskegon, Michigan, a town, in the western part of the state, that was settled by strict Dutch Calvinist sectarians. Not long after the Pentecostal movement began—or, rather, broke out, in a series of revival meetings in Kansas and Southern California—Jim's grandfather Joe Bakker became a lay evangelist for the movement. In the early years of this century, according to Shepard, he handed out Bible tracts on street corners and held prayer meetings; later, he founded the first Assembly of God church in Muskegon. Joe Bakker otherwise farmed celery in the mucklands nearby, and his life was a struggle for survival. Jim's father, Raleigh Bakker, worked as a machinist in a piston-ring plant in Muskegon Heights; he kept his job during the Depression, but by the time of his retirement, in 1969, he made no more than fourteen thousand dollars a year. A faithful member of the Assemblies of God, he was a man of uncompromising, if somewhat eccentric, beliefs. Jim Bakker wrote, in his autobiography—"Move That Mountain!," published in 1976—that as a boy he had felt humiliated because his family lived in an orange-colored cement-block house and he had to wear a shabby jacket to school. According to Shepard, the house in question was not made of cement blocks or painted orange, and Jim's parents swore they would never have sent him to school in shabby clothes. Jim was given to making things up for dramatic effect. All the same, his humiliation may have been real, for, born in 1940, he grew up in a time of sustained economic growth that reached even to Muskegon, and a time when popular culture and the mass media were putting unbearable strains on the traditional Pentecostal prohibitions. Jim went to church and observed most of the prohibitions. But he cared a great deal about his appearance, he loved popular music, and he was fascinated by television. In high school, he acted as the disk jockey at the dances, worked on the school newspaper, and produced an Ed Sullivan-style variety show. He longed to travel and see the bright lights, but his grades were too poor to allow him to think about a university. After graduating, in 1959, a year behind his class, he went to North Central Bible College, in Minneapolis.

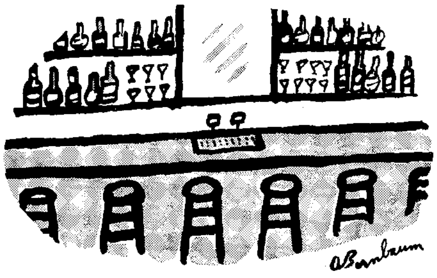
At North Central, an Assemblies of God school, Jim learned about Oral Roberts. The leading evangelist and faith healer in the Pentecostal movement, Roberts had by the late fifties gone a long way toward reformulating Pentecostal theology and modernizing the practice of evangelism. In 1947, according to his biographer, David Edwin Harrell, Jr., he had had a revelation while reading a verse from the third Epistle of John: God wanted His children to prosper and be healthy; He was a good God—not a God of endless suffering and sacrifice but a God who wanted His children to find comfort, happiness, and material rewards in this life. The revelation was liberating to Roberts, and his message came as a huge relief to many Pentecostals, for it meant that poverty and self-deprivation were not a part of God's plan for good Christians. Like his contemporary Billy Graham, who had dropped the world-rejecting aspects of fundamentalism and relabelled himself an "evangelical," Roberts was opening the way for Pentecostals to move into the middle class without losing their faith. Like Graham, too, he had established a successful media ministry and the proposition that radio and television would be the campgrounds of the future. For many students at North Central, Roberts was both an inspiration and a model. Bakker—among many others, no doubt—aspired to a television ministry and embraced Roberts' tolerant, optimistic faith.

Bakker did not graduate from Bible school; in his second year, he dropped out in order to marry a fellow-student, Tamara Faye LaValley. Then nineteen years old, Tammy Faye came from International Falls, Minnesota, a small town on the Canadian border, and from a family that was a good deal poorer than Jim's. The house she grew up in had an outdoor privy and a tin tub for bathing which had to be filled by hand. The eldest of eight children, she had helped her mother take care of the other children from such an early age that she herself had no real childhood. Still, only four feet eleven and slight, she looked like a child, and she knew even less than Jim did about the world.

A few months after their marriage, Jim and Tammy drove south and took up the life of itinerant evangelists, going from one Pentecostal church to another in North Carolina, West Virginia, and Tennessee. They would hold a week-long revival at each church, earning only what was put in the collection plate for them. Jim preached and Tammy sang, accompanying herself on piano, organ, or accordion. To hold the attention of Sunday-school children, they put on puppet shows, with puppets made out of bubble-bath containers, while they taught simple lessons about God. In 1964, they were invited to do a Saturday children's show for a few weeks on a struggling UHF religious television station in Portsmouth, Virginia. Pat Robertson, the owner of the station and of its parent, the Christian Broadcasting Network, saw their performance and a year later hired them to produce a regular children's show for CBN.

The Bakkers, it turned out, were natural television performers. They were warm, unsanctimonious, and full of high spirits. For their children's show they created a full cast of puppets—Susie Moppet, Allie the Alligator—drawing freely from "Kukla, Fran, and Ollie" and other secular programs for children. Jim acted as the host and straight man while Tammy worked the puppets, assuming different voices and expressing the conflicts in her own feelings through the animals. The show was a big success, and a year later they began a second show for CBN—a late-night talk show called "The 700 Club," in which Jim interviewed local pastors and Christian celebrities passing through town, Tammy sang, as she had in the churches, and viewers called in with testimonies.

Pat Robertson, who was the son of a former United States senator from Virginia, and had graduated from Washington and Lee University and from Yale Law School, was an innovator in the world of religious broadcasting. While other evangelists simply bought airtime for their programs, he bought television and radio stations and syndicated his programs for distribution nationwide. In 1977, he bought a satellite transmitter to beam his broadcasts and those of other preachers directly to cable stations around the country. Jim Bakker was an innovator of another kind. In his autobiography he claims that he had agreed to work for CBN on the condition that he could produce a talk show modelled on Johnny Carson's show on NBC. Robertson later denied that he would have accepted the idea of a program based on Carson's. But "The 700 Club" was so successful that Robertson himself later adopted the format, and so did others in the second generation of televangelists. What had been for Pentecostals an unbridgeable gap between the church and the world was—on television, at least—shrinking to a very fine line.



At CBN, Jim and Tammy had a much more varied audience than they had had in the small churches of the border states. CBN attracted not only Pentecostals but charismatics from non-Pentecostal denominations—who simply believed in the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Pat Robertson was one of them: born a Southern Baptist, he moved to the fundamentalist wing of the denomination and then became a charismatic. In the nineteen-sixties, what was called the charismatic renewal movement had just begun; in the nineteen-seventies and early eighties, it gained great force as Methodists, Baptists, Episcopalians, Catholics, and others adopted glossolalia and other Pentecostal practices. During that time, the Assemblies of God, after two decades of no growth, went from six hundred and twenty-five thousand members to more than two million. Apparently, a large number of Americans were finding their churches too arid, and were looking for more mysticism, emotion, and magic. Charismatics, like the new Pentecostals, tended to be social conservatives, but, because they remained within their own denominations or formed independent churches, they were doctrinally heterodox. Evangelists who sought this audience therefore had to keep doctrine to a minimum.

The Bakkers were as well suited to this new religious environment as they were to television. Their shows were not heavy with metaphysics or Biblical exegesis; rather, the Bakkers tended to talk about their own feelings and their personal problems. According to Shepard, Jim Bakker never wrote scripts fo

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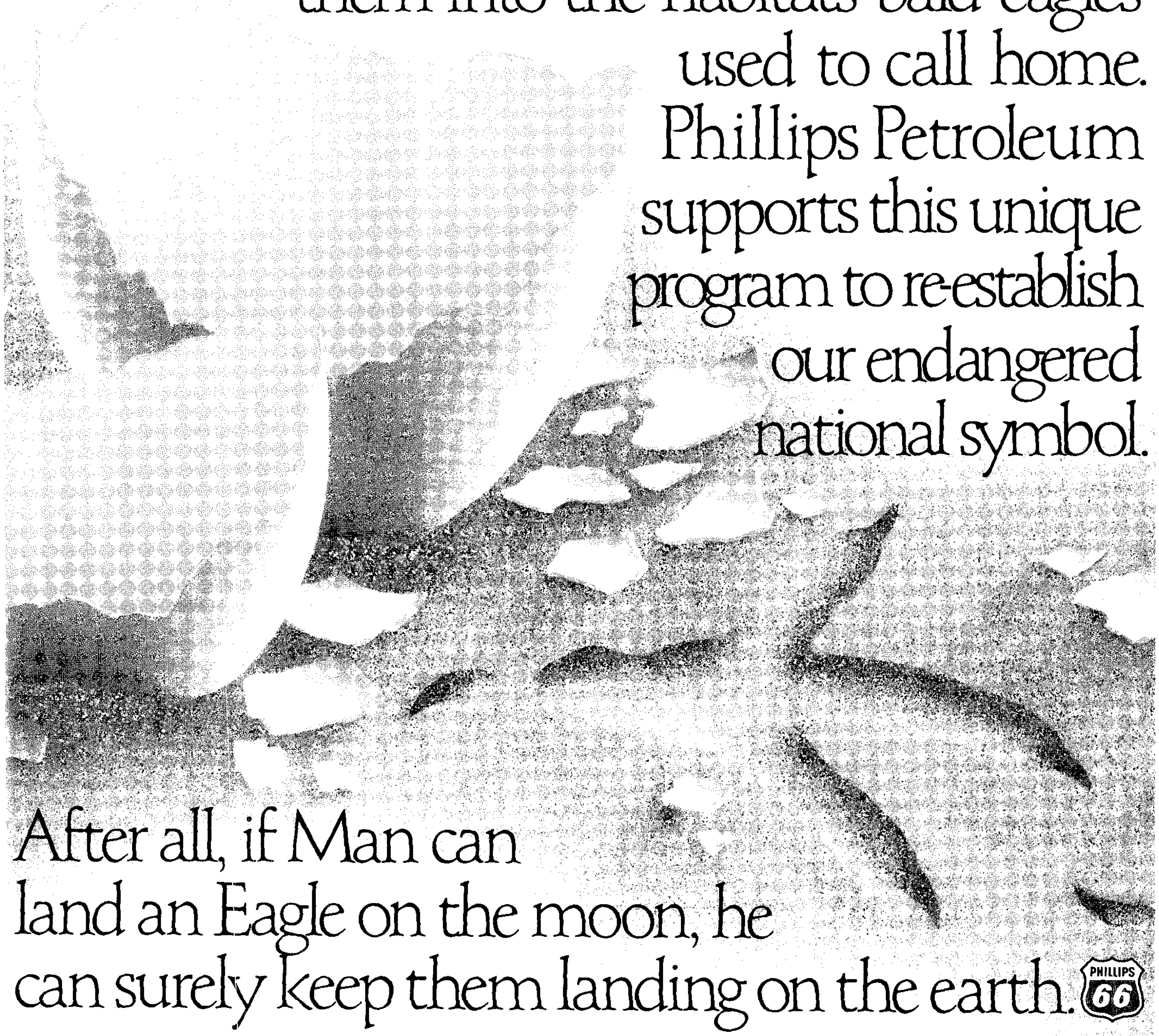

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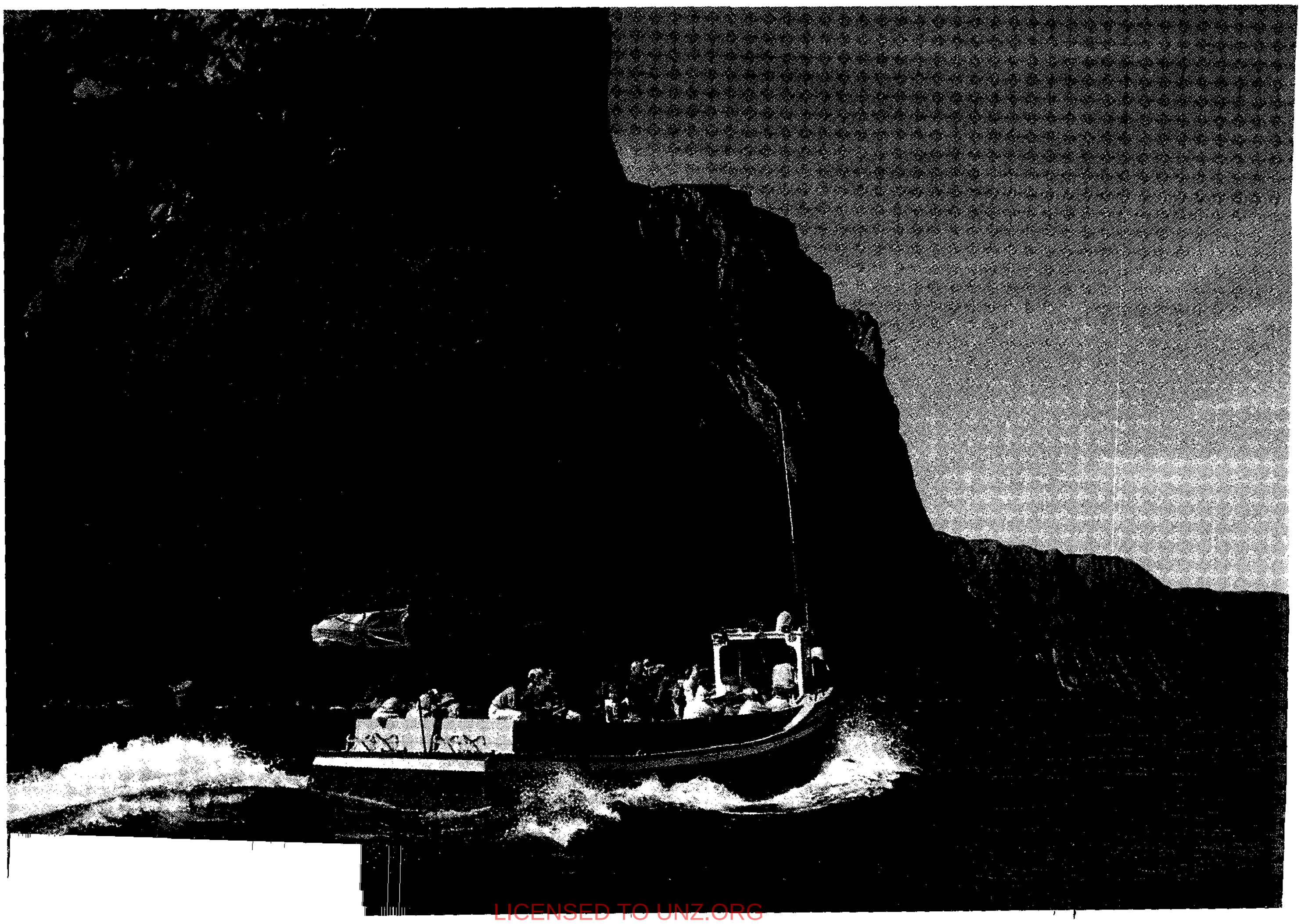
his shows, because he thought that planning inhibited "the move of the Holy Spirit." By all accounts, he had a keen sensitivity to the moment when the Spirit began to move and miracles happened. One night, according to Pat Robertson, he suddenly announced, "We are on holy ground here in the studio, and we'll have to take off our shoes." Soon everyone in the studio had his shoes off, and one of the cameramen was weeping so uncontrollably that there was a pool of water under his feet. From the beginning, however, Bakker discouraged the wilder Pentecostal practices on his shows—the writhing on the ground, the wrestling with demons—because he thought they looked "weird" on television. During the seventies, according to Shepard, he practiced a form of faith healing known as the Word of Knowledge, in which the healer would listen for a prophetic word from God and then identify someone in the audience whom God was healing of cancer or some other disease. Robertson practiced this form of healing into the late nineteen-eighties, when it proved a huge liability to his Presidential campaign. By then, Bakker had long given it up. In tune with the times, his Pentecostal practices grew progressively more restrained.

The Bakkers worked at CBN for about seven years. But Jim Bakker chafed under Robertson's authority, and by 1972 the tension between the star and the network owner had become too great for either to bear. The Bakkers quit, went to California, and produced a show at a Santa Ana station for two years. After losing a fight for control of the station, they came back East and took over a small television studio in Charlotte, North Carolina. Their shows did well, and in 1976 Bakker took the first steps toward building a syndication network such as Robertson had established. A year later, he bought a satellite transmitter—as Robertson had done a month earlier—and made plans to produce or acquire enough shows to fill the day with religious programming. Bakker called his network P.T.L. Its first home was a Georgian mansion in suburban Charlotte with twenty-five-acre grounds. In 1978, Bakker bought twelve hundred acres near Charlotte—most of it across the state border, in South Carolina—and began the construction of Heritage USA.

According to Shepard, P.T.L. was badly managed from the start. Money poured in, but it poured out just as quickly—much of it on land acquisition, television equipment, and the building of ever more luxurious studios and offices. On television, Bakker always talked about some extravagant new plan: he would build a university, start a school of evangelism, put P.T.L. on the air in Italy or Brazil. Most of the projects never materialized, either because they were totally impractical or because Bakker lost interest in them and wanted to use the money for something else. In Shepard's view, Bakker was childishly impulsive, willful, and incapable of facing up to any unpleasant reality. He would break ground for a new building when the P.T.L. treasury was empty, raise some money, and then move on to a new project, leaving the old one half finished. A few months later, he would have to pay the contractors double to get the work on the first building done on time. When it was completed, he



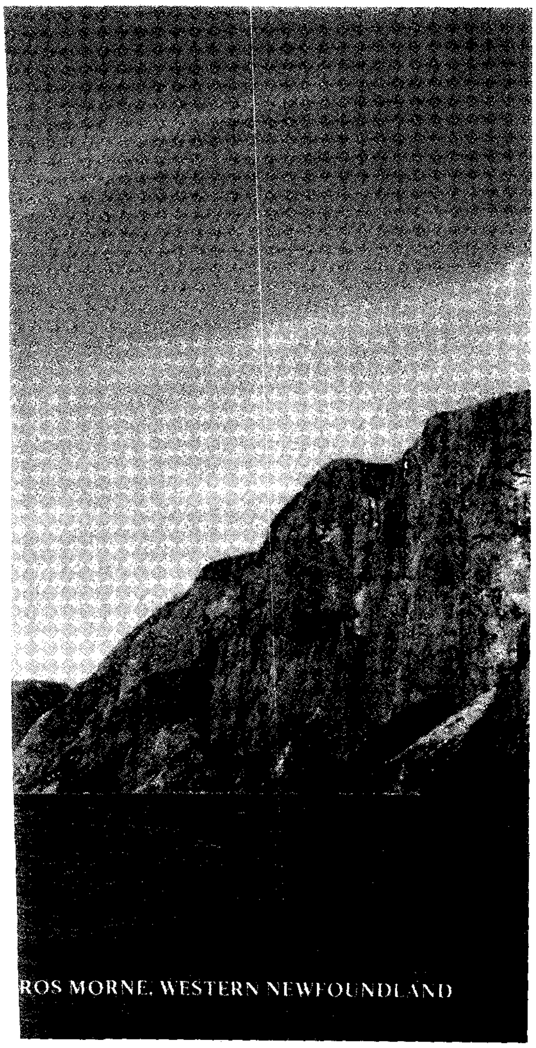
would invariably find some fault with it, and have the offending piece of construction torn out and redone. Occasionally, he would bring in a responsible money manager to curb the waste, but if the manager did his job well he would be fired, on the ground that he was interfering with Bakker's "creativity." Bakker liked to say that life at P.T.L. was a roller-coaster ride.

Bakker did not, of course, discuss the management of P.T.L. on the air. All the same, his style of management cannot have been much of a secret to those who watched "The Jim and Tammy Show." In the first place, a good deal of the charm of the Bakkers lay in their childlike qualities: their openness, their spontaneity. Tammy's scatterbrained humor reminded people of her heroine, Lucille Ball, but Tammy never took charge, as Ball's character Lucy often did. All giggles and babyish chatter, Tammy remained adrift in her own feelings. Jim had a child's soft, blunted features and a Howdy Doody grin. He kept his slender, boyish figure into his forties and often wore boyish clothes—slacks or shorts and a tennis sweater—rather than suits. The contrast with the other televangelists could hardly have been more striking. Big, powerfully built men, Jimmy Swaggart, Jerry Falwell, and Pat Robertson embodied heavy masculine authority. They were the shepherds of their flocks—or the rams ready to do battle. Beside them, Bakker looked like a cute kid—and, on occasion, like a little lost boy. The title "pastor" never adhered very well to him, and on the show he kept portly, avuncular figures around him, such as his longtime assistant, Uncle Henry Harrison, to complete the television family. Then, too, "The Jim and Tammy Show" was itself a roller-coaster ride, for every week some new crisis would pitch the Bakkers from despair to rejoicing. Would Tammy get her Christmas presents wrapped on time? Would Jim exhaust himself trying to raise money for some new project? It was like a soap opera with all the dull parts left out.

The Bakkers did not preach industry, thrift, and responsible long-term planning. They preached the move of the Spirit and financial miracles. Oral Roberts taught that if you gave to God you would be repaid many times over, and that if you prayed with enough faith, and if God willed it, your prayers would be answered. For the Bakkers, there was nothing at all metaphorical, or even conditional, about this promise. "If you pray for a camper, tell God what color," Bakker once advised his audience. Otherwise, he said, you were asking God to "do your shopping for you." Tammy reported in her autobiography—"I Gotta Be Me," published in 1978—what happened when she and Jim prayed for a trailer during their days on the road:

> We took this meeting in West Virginia, a tiny church up in the mountains. God began to bless and move. We started praying for the trailer in that meeting and people put hundred-dollar bills in the offering for us. We were embarrassed because we had been putting $20 and $30 in the bank. Now God was performing a miracle and giving us the most money we had ever had in our lives.

The next week, the Bakkers bought a trailer, but—so the story went on—it soon broke down, because of a mechanical defect. Tammy cried about the trailer in church, and a revival broke out. Then, thanks to the kindness of a passerby, who photographed the defect,



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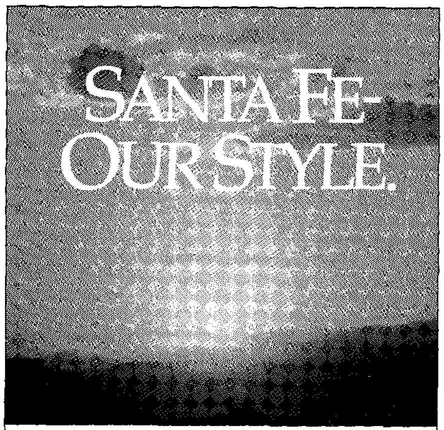

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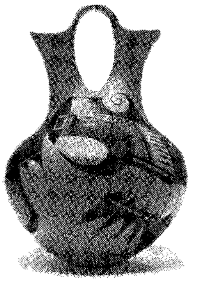
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the manufacturer replaced the trailer with a new and better one.

Later, of course, miracles like this happened to the Bakkers all the time. Only the quantities had changed. "It's important to recognize I didn't start out on a level of faith working with millions of dollars," Bakker once wrote. "I started out by believing God for a newer car than the one I was driving. I started out believing God for a nicer apartment than I had. Then I moved up." Now Jim just had to pray on television and millions of dollars floated out of envelopes at P.T.L. Bakker himself did not claim credit for raising the money: that was God's work and a sign of His anointing, just as when Bakker had prayed and someone in the audience had declared himself cured of cancer. How, then, could Bakker behave like an accountant, or be expected to behave like one? Miracles could not be accounted for, predicted, or saved for a rainy day. And if Bakker acted on impulse, or changed his mind about what to do with the money when it came in, that was the way the Spirit moved him. It was apparently not God's plan for him to start a university or finance a P.T.L. show in Italy; it was God's plan that he build "the campground of the 21st century" at Heritage USA, complete with a water slide and luxury hotels. Bakker once asked, "Why should I apologize because God throws in crystal chandeliers, mahogany floors, and the best construction in the world?"

Many people who watched Bakker for the first time after the scandal broke found it impossible to understand how anyone could listen to this kind of talk. It sounded so shockingly materialistic. Why should God be involved with the quality of Bakker's décor? And how could He be asked to deliver a camper that was, say, burgundy rather than navy blue? The answer was that a believer could look at it from the opposite point of view: it was not that the supernatural was mundane but, rather, that the material world had a miraculous, God-filled quality; the chandeliers were spiritual chandeliers, and the burgundy camper that came in answer to prayer was a sign of His presence in the world. That was what Bakker's supporters meant when they described Heritage USA as "Heaven on earth." Still, it could be argued that a God who bothered to throw in chandeliers was not recognizably Christian. Some of Bakker's fellow-preachers made this very point. But then Bakker was hardly alone in preaching this kind of message.

WHAT the prosecutors in the Bakker trial would surely have been surprised to learn was that God's relationship to personal and corporate finance was a major subject of theological debate in Pentecostal and charismatic circles during the nineteen-eighties. At the time, many of the leading evangelists in those circles were preaching what was known as "health-and-wealth theology" or "the prosperity gospel." That gospel was not entirely new: it had always been a matter of Pentecostal folk theology that if your car broke down or if you were behind on mortgage payments you might pray for a miracle. Then, too, it had been a minor plank in Oral Roberts' theology since 1947: divine healing was not confined to the body alone; God healed the whole man, including his finances. In the nineteen-seventies, however, charismatic evangelists, including Roberts himself, developed those rather simple beliefs into an elaborate theology—or a series of theologies. Roberts preached what he called "seed-faith," the key principle of which was that if you gave to God you would be richly rewarded, for the Bible said that God would supply "abundantly" the material needs of His children. At the same time, an influential charismatic group known as the "faith movement" preached prosperity theology as a spiritual discipline. Among the practices the group recommended was "positive confession," or prayer for a specific object or outcome—a practice known to its detractors as "name it and claim it." In one form or another, the prosperity gospel became a dominant theme of charismatic preaching during the nineteen-eighties.

Yet, as the gospel gained ground, it was the subject of increasing attack from Calvinist quarters. Did Jesus die on the Cross to satisfy the vulgar desires of man? Surely the purpose of Christian giving was not the expectation that the check would be returned with a zero on the end. A variety of critics raised a variety of objections. Jimmy Swaggart, for example, maintained that positive confession had more to do with positive thinking, or with some New Age cultish practice than it did with Christianity. Evangelicals of the Billy Graham school worried about the social implications of the doctrine. If God intended His children to prosper, did that mean that the poor were entirely responsible for their own poverty, or that the poor were less godly than the rich? The controversy was a complicated one, in that not all preachers of health and wealth could be accused of such reductiveness, nor would any of the critics go so far as to deny the efficacy of prayer. But Jim Bakker was an obvious target, for though he had not originated any particular doctrine, he seemed to conservatives and liberals alike to preach the prosperity gospel in so thin a form that it was in actual conflict with what they considered the basic message of the Gospel. *Christianity Today*, a magazine associated with Billy Graham, pointed out that when Bakker was asked about the passage in which Jesus asks a rich young ruler to give up everything and follow him he had said:

> Keep reading. Later in that chapter Jesus says everything we give up will be returned to us. What would have happened if the rich young ruler had given all to serve Jesus? I sincerely believe he probably would have moved up in his ruling class. Everywhere we turn Jesus was preaching an abundant, full life.

Bakker, however, could hardly have been read out of the body of the church for holding such views. In the first place, prosperity theology was preached by so many people and in such a variety of ways that any doctrinal line had to be drawn in the sand. In the second place, his critics had no institutional authority to draw one. Televangelists were, after all, free to preach what they pleased, and people were free to listen or not. Thus, doctrinal choices were made by a free market. What worried Bakker's critics was precisely that: the larger his audience, the more his preaching was manifestly the religious fare of choice in America.

In 1984, Bakker, who had begun a decade before with nothing but a studio in an empty furniture store, was running an enormous enterprise. P.T.L. was now a national organization, with thirteen hundred cable systems serving twelve million homes. It was bringing in sixty-six million dollars a year and had eighty-six million dollars in assets. But, with as many as nine hundred people on its payroll, it had equally staggering expenses and, often, huge debts. Given P.T.L.'s history of erratic management, no bank would provide the long-term credit the ministry required; Bakker eventually managed to borrow ten million dollars from a savings-and-loan association (thereby making his own contribution to the savings-and-loan crisis of 1989), but that was not enough to sustain the organization for long. It was in this context that, in 1983, Bakker began to sell his lifetime partnerships. At the start, the idea must have seemed a brilliant one, for the money rolled in, and construction on Heritage USA proceeded apace. The only trouble was that the more partnerships Bakker sold, the more contributions to the general fund dropped, and the more dependent the organization became on the partnerships. It was a downward spiral.

About this time, Bakker began taking larger and larger amounts of money from P.T.L. Above his base salary of two hundred and fifty thousand dollars a year, he took bonuses of two and then four hundred thousand dollars a year, and then a million dollars and more. His handpicked board of

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directors asked no questions, and his top executives were themselves paid off with big bonuses and lots of perks. Under the watchful eye of the Charlotte *Observer*, Bakker bought a house overlooking Palm Desert, California; a house in Gatlinburg, Tennessee; and then a house in Palm Springs. Each house was decorated at vast expense and stuffed with new furniture and the latest in high-tech appliances. Bakker also bought a fleet of automobiles, including four Mercedes-Benzes and two antique Rolls-Royces, and rackfuls of expensive suits and shoes. Tammy, less discriminating, bought clothes from K mart as well as from Fifth Avenue department stores. Still, in sheer quantity she may have outdone her husband, for she had closet after closet of dresses, and she often gave away boxes of them with the price tags still on them.

APOLOGY

You ask if my local shrubbery
might contain a nest—
last season's stopover
stitched to birch
or bittersweet.

I go out hunting
for the little disturbance
domestication creates,
the roadside nebulas
suspended from wintry limbs.
It's like looking for luck
in a field of clover;
either your eye adjusts
to expectation, fulfilled,
or you go home empty-handed.

It turns out many wild moments of hope
have been left behind
in the underbrush,
here constructed
from tenuous liaisons
of fur and broomstraw,
and here the result
of scavenged cigarette wrappers
delicately interwoven
with grapes.

Seeing them,
I cannot help
but touch them.
We have had conversations like this,
the rough monuments to love
catching us by surprise,
the frayed attachments
more beautiful than anything
they actually gave rise to.

They will not be detached
without unravelling.
I leave the nests, believing
you will accept
these words instead.

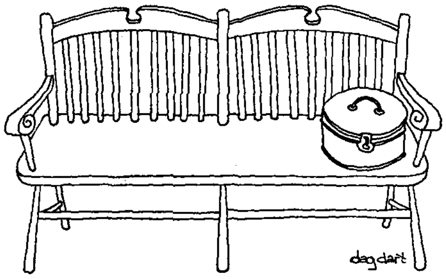
—Erica Funkhouser

• •

Tammy said she had a "shopping demon," and that is perhaps the best explanation for the Bakkers' relentless consumerism. Yet her shopping trips seemed merely to distract her from her other demons. She gained weight, swallowed all kinds of pills, and, in early 1987, had to be taken to a clinic for drug dependency. Jim Bakker had another kind of habit, which he claimed was good for his nerves: sex in the form of masturbation with other men. His partners were staff members, and at least one of them seems to have been pressured into compliance with the threat of demotion or firing.

Unfortunately, there exists no written record of how Bakker's theology changed and developed over the years. Perhaps some divinity student will eventually piece one together, but it will be a difficult task. Sustained theological discourse was not, after all, a feature of "The Jim and Tammy Show," and P.T.L. had no publication, such as the Jimmy Swaggart ministry had, on Biblical interpretation and moral instruction. The various books that Bakker published under his name included two self-help manuals—one on how to struggle against discouragement, the other on how to lose weight and keep it off—and a book advising commitment to the Lord. Then, too, Bakker had no educational institution requiring an educational policy. Rather than build a school of any sort, he built a counselling center, in which therapists dispensed advice on marital problems and what to do about feelings of unworthiness.

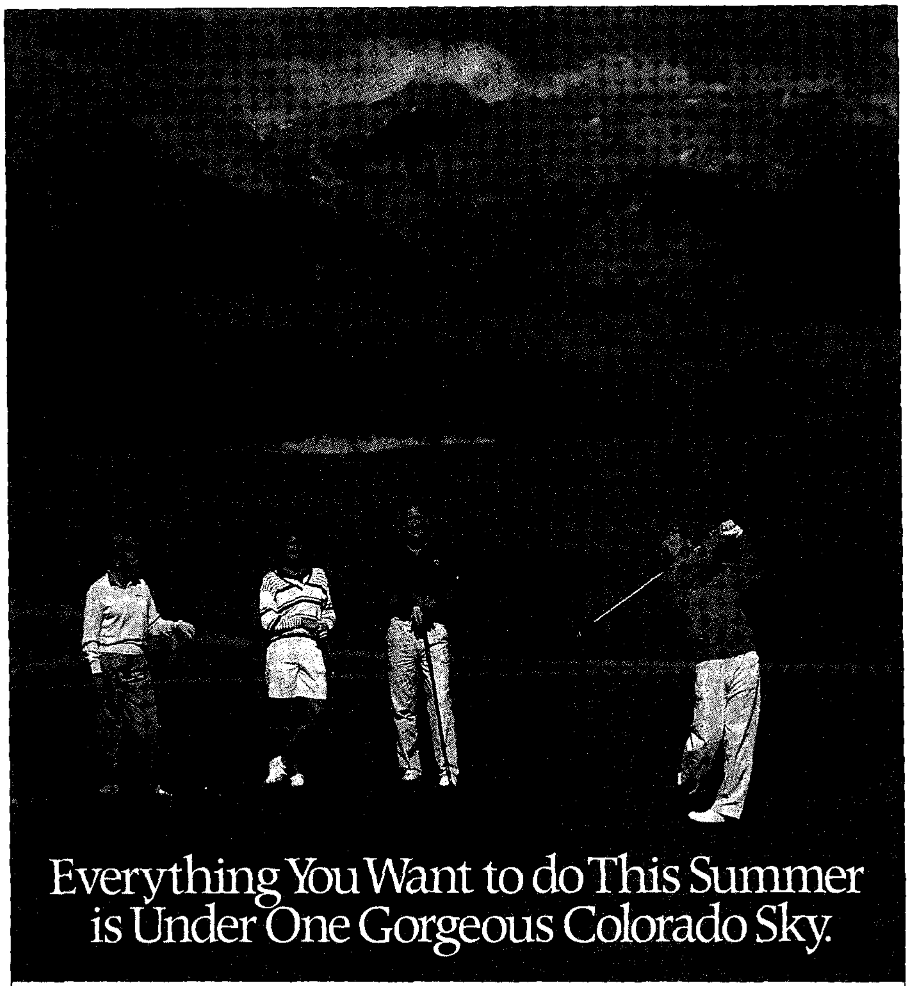
The absence of theological definition at P.T.L. was matched, in a positive, indicative way, by the kinds of people Bakker asked onto his show. What seems to have raised Swaggart's doubts about Bakker in the first place was Bakker's asking Hollywood actors to appear with him: that represented an unacceptable crossing of the line Swaggart drew between the church and the world. To look at the lists of the Bakkers' guests, some of them published in Tammy's autobiography and in a P.T.L. promotional picture book published in 1986, is, however, to see doctrinal lines crossed every which way and a group of people so eclectic as to defy almost any definition. The Bakkers' guests included Billy Graham and Oral Roberts, James Robison and Robert A. Schuller (the son of the televangelist), faith healers, faith-movement preachers, a Catholic nun, and a Hollywood exercise guru. They also included Efrem Zimbalist, Jr. (a P.T.L. board member), Roy Rogers and Dale Evans, Mickey Rooney, Pearl Bailey, Anita Bryant, Little Richard, Mr. T., and (after his conversion) Larry Flynt. Bakker's soundstage was an open and tolerant kind of place: it was not at all racist; it was not politically partisan (Bakker had himself photographed with Jimmy Carter, with Ronald Reagan, and with George Bush); and, over and above the list of celebrities, it included a good many women. In fact, quite exceptionally for a Pentecostal televangelist, Bakker had women preachers at P.T.L. Sometimes he would have female as well as male preacher seated about him in the studio and preaching with him, one taking up where another left off, in the fashion of jazz musicians.



The tolerance on Bakker's soundstage was such that from time to time strange incidents occurred. Once, a woman appeared on the show maintaining that wifely submission was not Christian. There was some awkwardness, and she disappeared. On another occasion, Robert A. Schuller was heard to say, apropos of his own divorce, that divorce was merely a social and cultural situation, and not a moral problem at all. In December of 1986, a P.T.L. announcer said that among the forthcoming events to be held at Heritage USA was a conference of Christian hairdressers. Incidents like these must have sown some confusion in Bakker's audience.

To be sure, the absence of theological definition could be seen quite simply as a marketing mechanism for P.T.L. All televangelists, if they are to be successful, have to appeal to people across denominational boundaries, and Bakker may have just decided to set the doctrinal threshold low enough so that almost anyone could get in. But the occasional confusion on his show suggests a more interesting possibility. As Shepard points out, Bakker had no formal training in theology, not having completed even the introductory course in religious doctrine at North Central Bible College. Given the extreme shallowness of his grounding in doctrine, it is just possible that Bakker at some point slipped anchor and drifted away, taking his sizable television audience along with him.

According to Shepard, Bakker had once preached fire-and-brimstone sermons—of the sort he had no doubt been brought up on. But at P.T.L. he preached only the love of God: God healed, God answered prayers, God forgave. At the close of his show, Bakker would say, "God loves you, He really, really does." That was P.T.L.'s main slogan, and it could be found embossed or engraved on items throughout the gift shops of the park. P.T.L. promotional literature elaborated on this theme: "God *is* love. God is a God of restoration. Our ministry focuses on that simple, central truth." This was pure Oral Roberts, and Bakker's audience could certainly have chosen to believe that Bakker, like Roberts, simply chose to emphasize the positive, and that the rest was understood. Yet since Bakker preached only half of the Christian message who was to say that he believed in, or even remained conscious of, the other half? In any case, whatever Bakker privately believed, what he preached was an unbalanced equation, admitting of all kinds of possibilities. God might be ove, but if He was only love then He had no judgment, and there was no uch thing as sin. Bakker did not come ight out and say that, but he and his ellow-pastors so neglected the topic of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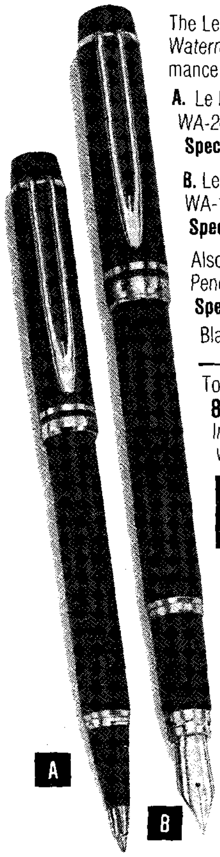

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sin that his audience apparently did not even notice it when, in the summer of 1986, with the Jessica Hahn scandal threatening to surface, he and other P.T.L. pastors segued into a series of messages that were almost purely antinomian.

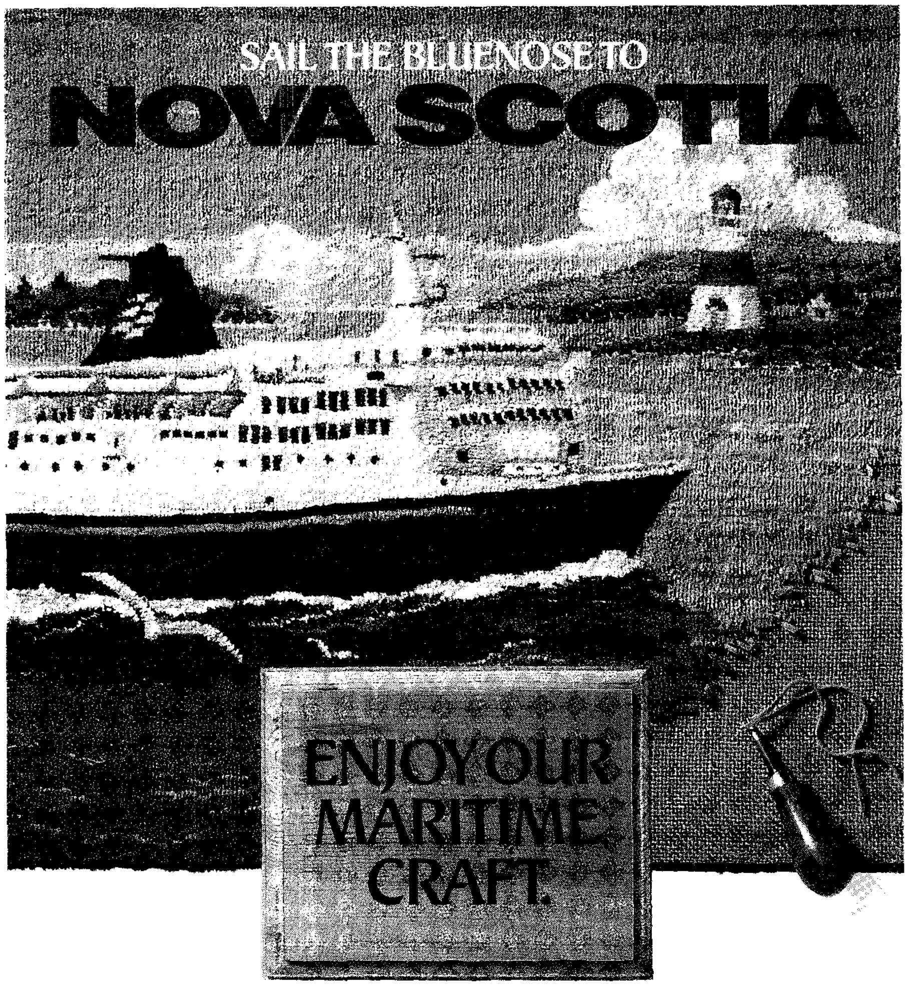
On one show that summer, Bakker began the discussion by reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians, Chapter 5: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free . . ." Paul's message in this chapter, he maintained, was that Christ had made men free of the Hebrew law. What he omitted to mention was Paul's conditions: "if ye be led of the Spirit" and "use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh." It was something like a Freudian slip, for Paul is extremely specific about "the flesh" in this chapter; indeed, he gives a list of fleshly sins, which includes adultery and fornication. On the same program, Bakker quoted the phrase "Love covers a multitude of sins," and explained, bizarrely, that it meant that Christians should cover up the sins of others. There were more strange messages like this during the year. At the end of May, an attractive couple, a young church musician and his wife, appeared on the show with the unlikely story that she was a former prostitute and he was a reformed homosexual. In August, Bakker gave an all-out, rip-roaring Pentecostal sermon—of the sort he rarely gave anymore—proposing that those who judged would go straight to Hell, for judging others was worse than any other sin. Clearly, this sermon was aimed at Swaggart.

The damage-limitation campaign culminated, after Bakker's resignation and after the Hahn scandal was exposed, with an announcement from Bakker that he was ready to come back to P.T.L., because God had already forgiven him. Apparently, God had not had the heart to put Bakker through the intermediary steps—the admission of sin, repentance, and so on. "Forgiven" was P.T.L.'s last slogan, and it appeared on bumper stickers and baseball caps all over Heritage USA and its environs. By then, however, not all the people in Bakker's audience were ready to swallow this new lesson in faith—or to forgive Bakker as quickly as he claimed God had done. All the same, his partners, who had sat quiet for months listening to his strange messages, were in no position to charge Bakker with hypocrisy. Bakker had not violated his own rules; rather, he had changed them in plain sight.

DURING his last year at P.T.L., Bakker spent a great deal of airtime advertising Heritage USA and urging people to get their lifetime partnerships before the opportunity ran out. Sometimes his pitches were purely secular, but sometimes he interlaced the ads with hymns and scripture readings, creating surreal video collages. On one program, P.T.L. singers sang "We are the army of the Lord" over photos of teen-agers in scanty suits floating down the sluiceways of the water park on inner tubes. Bakker was building at a frantic pace that year. He had at least to appear to keep up with his sale of partnerships. Yet Heritage USA seemed to be much more to him than a money-raising vehicle. He was, by his own account, obsessed by it. He planned every feature of it and involved himself so thoroughly in the design work that he could specify the proportions of a lobby, the materials used to coat a swimming pool, and the furniture on order for the hotel bedrooms. His plans were way out ahead of the construction; they went far beyond what P.T.L. could conceivably afford to build in the foreseeable future and into the wilder stretches of the imagination. The television star had become a master builder with a vision of something never yet seen under the sun.

Certainly, most televangelists are great builders. It is as if they had a need to match their incorporeal media empires with an equivalent presence in space. And because they live in worlds of symbolism and interpretation they tend, as Harding points out, to build symbolic representations of their ministries. Anyone who had been to two or more of their headquarters would see how expressive the architecture is of their theologies and personalities. The contrasts are quite startling. Robert Schuller's Crystal Cathedral, for example, which was designed by Philip Johnson, is an enormous articulated glass case without any interior supports. Looked at from the inside, it seems to encompass the heavens; looked at from the outside, it melds perfectly with the prosperous glass-sheathed office buildings of Anaheim, California. That is Schuller's universe. Oral Roberts' Tulsa university and hospital complex are far stranger. Covering acres of flat bottomland, they look from a distance like a model that some Marriott Hotel architect might enter in a design competition for the first city on the moon. The buildings include high rises sheathed in white tile and gold-tinted reflecting glass, a gold geodesic dome, and a prayer tower that looks like a satellite station; in front of the hospital complex is an aquamarine reflecting pool out of which sprout two sixty-foot-high bronze hands folded in prayer. Jimmy Swaggart's ministry headquarters and Bible college, in Baton Rouge, are by comparison masterpieces of architectural restraint. Their gleaming-white buildings, set amid lawns, flower beds, and rows of flags, are modern and expensive-looking, but, lush and sensual as the complex is, there is nothing in it to shock conventional sensibilities. As for Falwell's empire, in Lynchburg, Virginia, it looks exactly like the home of a fundamentalist Baptist. It consists of a large, octagonal red brick church in town—an undistinguished building, but one solidly in the Virginia tradition—and, some miles away, in the countryside, a university campus composed of low-lying, no-nonsense brick buildings and dominated by a football stadium. That Bakker should have chosen Falwell to take charge of Heritage USA was, on the face of it, the strangest thing in Christendom.

When I went to Heritage USA, in October of 1987, some seven months after the Bakkers had left, the gateway looked like the entrance to an important national park. There were toll booths—though cars were not asked to stop at them—and an information center with postcards, T-shirts, and literature. But then the road wandered off past some houses and away into the countryside; it crossed several unmarked intersections and eventually petered out. After turning around and trying one crossroad after another, I took one that brought me within sight of a large, almost urban complex of buildings with an immobile crane hanging over the tallest of them. The road at this point passed under a series of wooden archways covered with tinsel. This seemed auspicious; however, the road led past parking lots behind the buildings and away again into the countryside. Finally, I discovered a turn that took me around to the front



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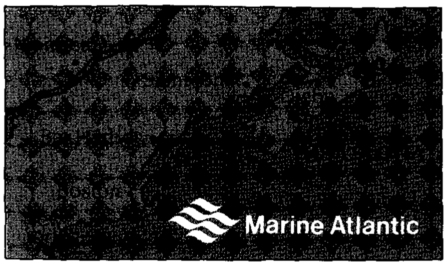

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and deposited me under the white-columned porte cochère of the Heritage Grand Hotel. A doorman in a white uniform dripping with silver braid was leaping from one car to the next crying "God loves you!" and "Have a nice day!" in a Carolina country accent.

Having spent time in Falwell's domain, I kept expecting some kind of question about the state of my soul, a question that would serve as a challenge: Are you one of us or one of them? But in the course of two days I spent at Heritage USA the challenge never came, and the only injunction addressed to me was that of the doorman. Tolerance reigned in Bakker's kingdom. The people I saw at Heritage USA seemed as diverse as most crowds at Disneyland, and the conversations I managed to strike up made it hard to imagine them all in a single church congregation. What, for instance, did a poised, formally dressed couple I met on the tour bus have in common with a young woman I found next to the water park alternately spouting Corinthians and speaking in tongues?

Just as a matter of geography, I found it hard to figure out a religious center to Heritage USA. The P.T.L. picture book spoke of a Heritage Village Church, a Heritage Village Church sanctuary, a Heritage Grand Ministry Center, and a World Outreach Center. But there was no overtly religious building or symbol within sight of the hotel, and the tour bus took visitors past campgrounds with a swimming pool and tennis courts to the P.T.L. television studios. Next to the studio building was a large auditorium, also used for the taping of television shows, where church services were held on Sundays. This was apparently the Heritage Village Church sanctuary. The World Outreach Center turned out to be the administrative offices for P.T.L. (and was therefore not on the tour); the Heritage Grand Ministry Center was in fact an indoor swimming pool (now closed) that was used for baptisms once a week. Looking at the P.T.L. picture book more closely, I realized that the "chapel" it said Bakker had built in the early days of P.T.L. was actually part of a television studio, and the building that looked like a church in one photograph was Bakker's first studio building in Charlotte. A passage in the introductory section of the picture book went some way toward accounting for the confusion. "What *is* a church?" it asked rhetorically. "Not just a building. Not just a ritual, not just a set of dogmas, not just an institution or a hierarchy. . . . Heritage Village Church shows that the church can be all-encompassing, not just a part or a compartment of life, but life itself, all of life, with nothing left out."

Heritage Village Church, then, was everything that happened at Heritage USA. Bakker had simply pasted the label "church" on all of it. He may possibly have done that for tax purposes, but clearly he had made the label stick, for in my two days there I heard several people say, "This is Heaven on earth." And they meant it literally.

Whether Heritage USA was Heaven or something else, it was certainly the product of a vision, and a completely original one, though everything in it was a fake, a borrowing, an imitation, or a reproduction. Bakker had learned a great deal from Disneyland, but the architectural and ontological confusion of Heritage USA was something that the Disney planners could not have tolerated. Nothing in it was quite as it seemed, and there was simply no guessing what you would come across next. The centerpiece was the water park, with its hundred-and-sixty-three-foot slide coming off a fake mountain, and with its acres of swimming pools. Fronting the water park was a street that began with the Heritage Grand Hotel—a "Colonial" brick building with cathedral windows. Beyond the hotel was the Victorian façade of a street in some imaginary Southern town, with real pastel-colored balconies and grillwork. Beyond that was an unfinished building shaped like a sandcastle, which was to have housed the largest Wendy's in the world. On the other side of the water park was an amphitheatre with a castellated façade, where the P.T.L. Passion play was staged at night, complete with special effects, including fire-and-brimstone explosions when the Devil appeared. After passing through campgrounds and by a fast-food restaurant, you would come to a solid stone building that was said to be an exact replica of the building in Jerusalem where Jesus and his disciples were thought to have had their Last Supper. The Upper Room in this building was a sanctuary where pastors would hold Communion and pray over a big clear-plastic box full of letters from P.T.L. partners asking for miracles.

In another part of the park, by an artificial lake, were imitation Swiss chalets for rent and the Recreation Village, a family-entertainment center with a roller-skating rink, playgrounds, and a carrousel. There was also a little red train, which made a circuit of the lake, and which Bakker had loved to drive. Before Falwell's economies went into effect, there had also been a miniature village where mechanized gnomes with wings and beards bobbed up and down in time to winking lights and religious music coming from hidden loudspeakers. Children these days had to make do with the entertainment center and with the Farm—a newly built imitation farm with a petting zoo, a farmhouse, and a fine wooden stable filled with horses. For grownups, the other notable sights included an imitation Victorian mansion and the actual house where Billy Graham had spent his boyhood—a brick building that had been disassembled, moved, and reconstructed at Heritage USA.

If Bakker had been allowed to continue, he would—or so he had said on his television shows—have built a row of Western-style bunkhouses around the Farm, and another campground near an artificial lake, centered on a Southern plantation house. When he left, the lake had been dug, and on the far side of it he had broken ground for a building with a million square feet of space, which was to be a more or less exact replica of the Crystal Palace, of the 1851 Great Exhibition in London. His plans at the time also included a full-scale replica of the entire Old City of Jerusalem, and a roller coaster that would take its riders through tunnels representing Heaven and Hell.

Before the fall of the Bakkers, there had been a great many evening entertainments and special events at Heritage USA: dinner theatres, gospel-music concerts, musical comedies, and workshops and conferences. On the Fourth of July, there was always a parade with fireworks. On New Year's Eve, there was a party with hundreds of balloons, at which Jim and Tammy made appearances—Tammy in an evening dress, Jim in white tie. Thanksgiving was observed with turkey dinners, and the Bakkers liked to celebrate their birthdays and P.T.L. anniversaries with parades, musical offerings, and parties at which they cut many-tiered frosted cakes. Now, after seven months of the Falwell regime, there was only the Passion play to go to in the evening, and only one celebration left: the only one that was on the Christian calendar.

Outside the Heritage Grand Hotel, it was a bright autumn day. Inside, it was Christmas, or the approaches thereto. Christmas boxes covered with gift paper and tied with ribbons decorated the entrance foyer. In a four-story atrium beyond, an elaborately trimmed Christmas tree rose almost to the ceiling. Just under the tree, a pianist in black tie, who looked like a young Liberace, played a Christmas medley on a gold piano. Apparently, the decorations had been put up in September in anticipation of the holiday season and a yearly P.T.L. extravaganza known as Christmas City, when the park was decorated with a million four hundred thousand lights and the church choir sang out of a tiered structure that looked like a Christmas tree.

A passageway led from the hotel atrium to a shopping mall, where—to judge from the temperature and a cloudy blue skyscape painted on the ceiling—it was still midsummer. Gaily painted vending stands dotted around the mall sold popcorn, cotton candy, and ice cream. This was Main Street, and behind a Victorian street façade were a fudge shop and a bakery. Other stores sold an overwhelming—indeed, almost encyclopedic—array of knickknacks, gifts, and mementos, many of them inscribed with homiletic mottoes. There were also a dress shop, a jewelry store, and a toy store with fancy doll houses and seriously expensive china dolls. Tammy dolls had once been sold here for six hundred and seventy-five dollars apiece, but all images of the Bakkers had been removed by the Falwell regime.

When Falwell came to P.T.L., he discovered all kinds of scandals, financial and sexual, but in his eyes the first scandal must have been Heritage USA. Falwell, after all, had built a university to train and discipline young adults for a life of service to God and a lifetime of struggle for position in a world dominated by "secular liberals." It was all work and no play in Falwell's empire, and the virtues he prized were traditionally masculine: fortitude, aggressiveness, the will to succeed, and the capacity for sacrifice. Winning souls was for him a war, or a business of some nineteenth-century kind where a thousand souls in Kansas City and two thousand in Houston make three thousand for the week. All rewards were deferred, and there was only one way to get them.

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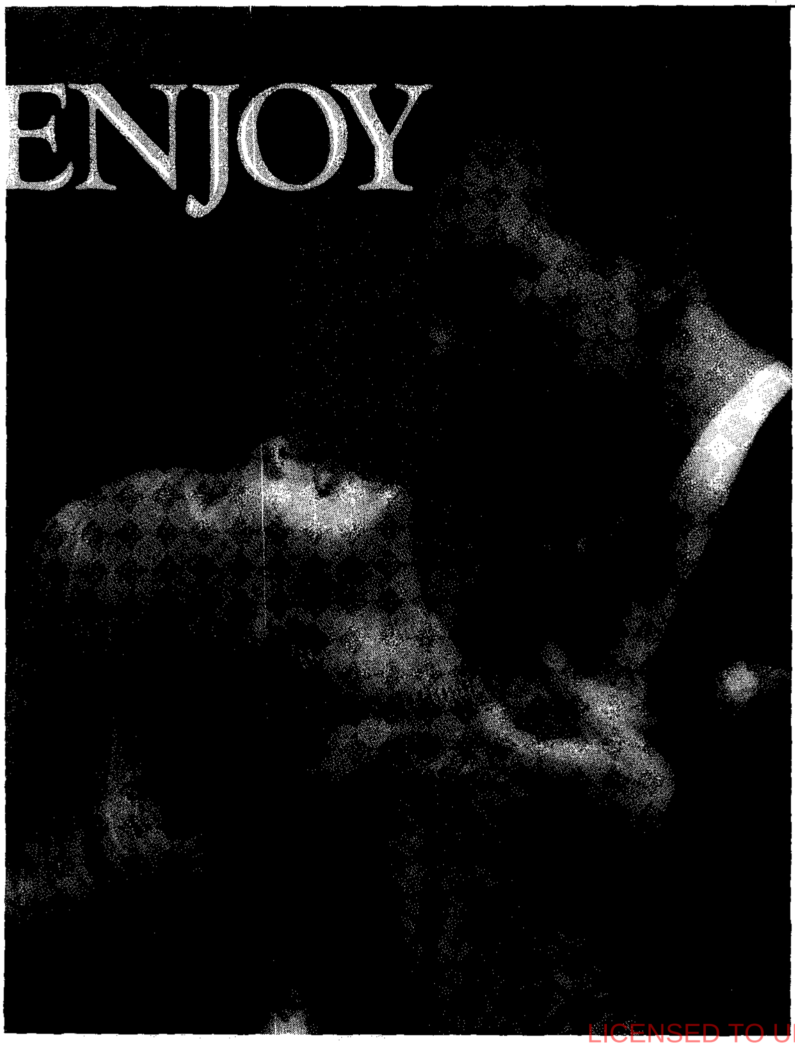

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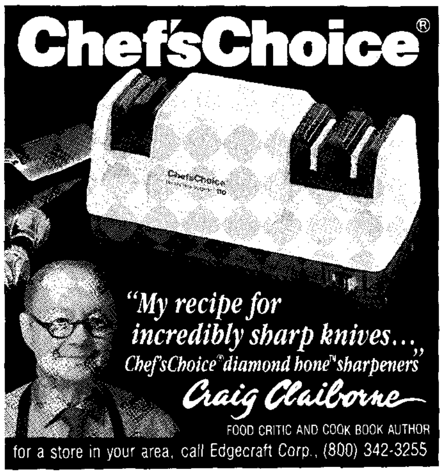

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land, an invitation to take time out. Bakker sometimes spoke of Heritage USA as a place where Christians would gather to evangelize the world for Christ before the last days. For visitors, however, it was an evangelical center only in a magical sense. It was the passive to Falwell's active: a world of fantasy, dispersion, and play. As Harding points out, there was no plan to it, merely the addition of one fantasy to another; no hierarchy of symbol and significance; and no set priorities beyond having a nice day. As Falwell's church was a factory for the mass production of soul winners and saints, Heritage USA was a paradise of consumption for children and infantilized women on the model of Tammy Faye. The Bakkers' ads for the Heritage Grand Hotel showed a woman in a bed jacket reclining against pillows and accepting a dainty breakfast tray from her husband. Later, such a woman could "surrender to temptation" in the shopping mall and buy sweets and treats—all empty calories—and mementos of no earthly use. And why not? This was a world of gifts, of unearned miracles of faith.

And, just as Falwell's world was "real," in the sense of functional and utilitarian, Bakker's was sentimental and quite clearly artificial. The Victorian street façade was quite clearly a façade, behind which you might expect to find a shopping mall. The architectural recall of an earlier America suggested that Heritage USA was designed not so much for children as for adults who wished to recapture childhood, and not childhood as it was but childhood as it *might* have been, full of love and pampering and indulgence—a land seen through a veil of sentiment, where it was always summer or Christmas, or even both at the same time.

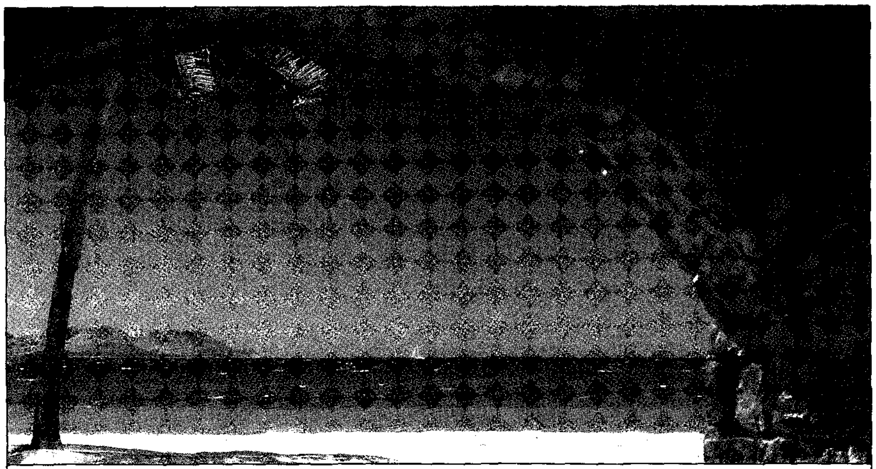
Falwell played the heavy father to his congregation, laying down the law, patrolling the boundaries between the church and the world, us and them. But there seemed to be no authority at Heritage USA: no guides, no printed rules, and no pastors—unless you sought them out. In Billy Graham's reconstructed family house, there was no sign of Billy Graham, no photograph of any size, and the well-kept rooms—the old-fashioned kitchen, the white-curtained bedrooms—reminded visitors only of the women who had lived in them. In fact, there was no masculine presence in any part of the design of Heritage USA. The man most in evidence was the doorman, but he looked like a child's vision of a doorman. Then, there was the long-haired young man in a dinner jacket tinkling away at the keys of the gold piano. To anyone from Falwell's church, this aspect of the décor would have been first startling and then offensive. But apparently Bakker's partners did not notice the boundary crossing—the violation of traditional Pentecostal gender codes. There were so many other confusions at Heritage USA—from Jerusalem to Disneyland—that it was disorienting, and so much play at the edges of religion and sacrilege that after a while it became difficult to see what was wrong with any specific part of the picture.

BY 1986, the P.T.L. audience had been watching Tammy Faye for so long that in all likelihood few people noticed the day or the month when her face disappeared behind a stiff, expressionless mask of makeup. According to Charles Shepard, Tammy's makeup was always a register of her feelings: she put on more makeup when she was feeling insecure or unhappy. She was now drug-dependent, and the mask was no doubt a cry for help. Yet, considering that the Pentecostal church of her youth had prohibited any kind of makeup, she was doing something far more serious: she was disfiguring herself with the forbidden.

Shepard, who watched Bakker closely for more than three years, came to a harsh and unequivocal conclusion about Jim Bakker's character: he was "an ossified, self-centered manchild sheltered by success and self-deception," and narcissistic to the point of pathology. In his book Shepard tells us enough about Bakker's lies, his tyrannical childishness, his exploitation of subordinates, his insatiable desire for adoration, and his dislike of his admirers to make a persuasive portrait. And if the portrait is accurate, then Jim Bakker created a caricature of himself in one of the last buildings he completed at Heritage USA.

The building was an imitation Victorian mansion known as Kevin's House. Shepard tells us the story behind it. In April of 1986, Bakker began to raise money for a home for handicapped children. His inspiration, and also his biggest money-raising as-set, was Kevin Whittum, the adopted son of a cousin of his. The victim of a rare bone disease, Kevin was twenty-nine inches tall, with a head too big for his small body, and tiny, flipperlike legs. When he was lifted out of his automated wheelchair and put on the floor, he lay on his back, helpless as a baby. He was, however, an intelligent, articulate seventeen-year-old, who, in a squeaky little voice, appealed very effectively for money on TV. According to Shepard, Bakker saw something of himself in the boy. In any case, Bakker made Kevin a fixture on his show and designed Kevin's House on the model of the lumber barons' mansions in Muskegon that he himself had admired as a teen-ager. The two raised more than three million dollars for the house and spent nearly a million three hundred thousand constructing and furnishing it. The house, however, was not built to code for a group home—Bakker and his staff had somehow neglected to take the state building code into account—and when it was finished, in September of 1986, Kevin and his family moved into it alone. They were still there in October of 1987, for Kevin, by suing P.T.L. and by making appeals to the press, had personally defeated all attempts by Falwell to close the house. The house was disturbing to look at, because it was built to something like two-thirds or three-quarters scale, and the proportions were all off. Even more unsettling, however, were the interviews that Kevin gave on television: a mixture of self-serving calculation and God talk coming out of a deformed two-year-old-size body.

Jim Bakker resigned from his ministry on March 19, 1987, appointing Jerry Falwell chairman of the board. In a statement of explanation, Bakker alluded to the Jessica Hahn incident and the subsequent payoff but portrayed himself as the victim of blackmail by treacherous associates, and of persecution by the Charlotte *Observer*. Bakker was then expecting the Hahn scandal to surface any day. He knew that the *Observer* had the story, because Shepard and his editors had sent routine queries to P.T.L. What he did not know was that the *Observer* editors had got cold feet and were holding the story up day after day. Anyway, Bakker also had Jimmy Swaggart to worry about. Swaggart, as Shepard discovered in the course of his researches, had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known of the Hahn incident for almost a year, having heard about it from the preacher who took Hahn to Bakker. The previous May, Swaggart had confronted Bakker's co-pastor, Richard Dortch, with the story, and, in addition, with rumors he had heard about Bakker's homosexual activity. Dortch, though he himself had been in charge of the payoff to Hahn, denied everything. But since Swaggart had been attacking P.T.L. for over a year on religious grounds Bakker presumed that Swaggart would one day use the story to destroy him. He became convinced of this in July, when Swaggart confronted the Reverend Marvin Gorman, an Assemblies of God televangelist from New Orleans, with charges of adultery, and effectively destroyed his career. Swaggart said nothing about the Hahn story in public, but he did warn the presbyters of the Assemblies of God against Bakker, and continued his attacks on P.T.L. By March, rumors of the Hahn incident had leaked out from other sources, and there was a move afoot among Bakker's fellow-televangelists—Swaggart included—to confront him with the story.

In the days following his resignation, Bakker and Roy Grutman, a new lawyer he had engaged, claimed that an unnamed evangelist—clearly Swaggart—was conspiring to blackmail Bakker with the Hahn story in order to take over P.T.L. In response, Swaggart said that he had no interest in running an amusement park, and that Bakker was "a cancer that needed to be excised from the Body of Christ." Those were the opening salvos in what became known as the Holy Wars.

Why Bakker chose Jerry Falwell as the steward of P.T.L. is not clear to this day. Certainly he needed a counterweight to Swaggart, and the fact that Falwell was not a Pentecostal had apparent advantages, the first of them being that he was unlikely to have designs on a Pentecostal ministry. Still, the two men hardly knew each other, and Falwell approached his new job with caution. In a matter of days, he discovered that Bakker was planning to return to P.T.L. in the near future and that Richard Dortch, who was now running P.T.L., was the one who had arranged the payoff to Hahn. His suspicions aroused, Falwell acted on a tip from a reporter (possibly Shepard) and sent his accountants to the P.T.L. books. By mid-April, they had uncovered the millions of dollars that Bakker had been paying himself in bonuses, and the extent of the ministry's debts.

In the long-running drama played out on "Nightline" and "Larry King Live," Falwell not only exposed the financial corruption at P.T.L. but also confirmed that Bakker had had homosexual relations with members of his staff almost from the beginning of the ministry. In the process, however, Falwell made himself look like a power-hungry schemer, and a man who was not at all eager to give up control of the Pentecostal ministry. In late March, Oral Roberts made himself a laughingstock by going up into his prayer tower to pray and fast, having announced that God would take him home if he could not raise eight million dollars by the end of the month. All these events focussed the attention of the press on the huge sums of money the televangelists were taking in and the refusal of most of them to adopt any system of financial accountability.

Many—perhaps most—American television viewers reacted to the Holy Wars with some combination of amusement and disgust. Here was the equivalent of a street brawl in which men who purported to be Christian ministers accused one another of the most heinous sins, and lied and schemed to gain their own selfish ends. The Bakker trial, two and a half years later, seemed, by contrast, to be a matter of justice taking its course, and bringing an orderly conclusion to these scandals. The government, it appeared, in pursuit of its mission to protect its citizens from fraud, had exposed a con man in religious garb. That was the form the trial took. Yet the Charlotte *Observer*, in its editorial applauding the conduct of the trial and its verdict, noted that the government had for years taken no action against Bakker despite having "ample evidence that he was raising millions through the mail by making false promises over television." What Shepard's book shows is that the government's behavior verged on the scandalous, and that if it had not been for the Holy Wars Bakker might still be at P.T.L.

According to Shepard's careful account, federal agencies had been investigating P.T.L. for a decade, and had all kinds of evidence of lawbreaking. The first investigation began in 1979, after the *Observer's* exposé of Bakker's fund-raising on behalf of foreign missions. The Federal Communications Commission then spent a year and a half looking into P.T.L.'s activities and found substantial evidence of fraud. The investigators recommended further action, but the case was put off until the Reagan Administration settled on the appointment of new commissioners. In 1982, the commissioners voted four to three against taking further action, with two of the commissioners filing a strident dissent, which characterized the decision not to proceed as "arbitrary," "capricious," and "not in accordance with law." The F.C.C. turned the case over to the Justice Department, which declined to prosecute. Shortly thereafter—for reasons of its own—the Internal Revenue Service initiated an investigation of the ministry. Its investigators soon began to question the amounts Bakker and his top staff members were taking in compensation, and the tax-exempt status of the hotels and other commercial ventures at Heritage USA. They also found some suggestion that Bakker had appropriated P.T.L. funds for his own use. The I.R.S. audited P.T.L. every year from 1980 to 1987, but, though evidence of tax violations mounted, it did not act until the Bakkers, and then Falwell, had left the ministry. In 1988, when P.T.L. was in the hands of the courts, it revoked P.T.L.'s tax-exempt status from 1980 on and sued the now bankrupt ministry for almost fifty-six million dollars in back taxes. Its estimate was that the Bakkers had taken more than nine million dollars in "excess compensation" since 1980.

Bakker does not seem to have done any special pleading in Washington to forestall legal or administrative action against his ministry. Apparently, none was required. In the past, the federal government had prosecuted religious groups for similar transgressions. In 1973, for example, the Securities and Exchange Commission had put Falwell's ministry into the equivalent of receivership for floating a questionable bond issue. But the Reagan Administration opposed regulatory efforts in principle and across the board. In particular, it opposed regulation of the activities of fundamentalist churches; the Justice Department's decision to change the law by fiat and give Bob Jones University tax-exempt status despite its racially discriminatory policies was only the most egregious case in point. On top of that, the televangelists belonged to a special category, for most of them gave fervent support to Reagan during his two campaigns, and the President and the Vice-President regularly appeared at the annual convention of National Religious Broadcasters. The politics of the period being what they were, it is hard to imagine what offense Bakker would have had to commit to provoke a federal indictment.

"They say it's the last of the really big cattle drives, and I'm just glad I'm here to see it."

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IT is unlikely that the Holy Wars will be remembered as a high point in the history of American Protestantism. They were a series of brawls in which the most underhanded tactics were used and in which the general standards of behavior made everyone's motives suspect. Jimmy Swaggart seemed to be out to destroy his rivals for the Pentecostal television audience. Jerry Falwell clearly loved the fight and, once Bakker was out, clearly considered the benefits of controlling P.T.L. Still, this unseemly struggle meted out a rough kind of justice, and to look beyond personalities to what the three evangelists represented is to recognize a religious dimension to the struggle. What is more, it is to observe a system engaged in self-regulation.

Susan Harding, in her essay on the telescandals, points out that the "health and wealth" Pentecostals fashioned their theology in opposition to the fundamentalists. Oral Roberts and the other healing evangelists of the nineteen-forties and fifties worked against the legalism of the fundamentalist Pentecostal pastors; in the nineteen-eighties, Heritage USA was an implicit but nonetheless strident "critique of fundamentalism's restraint, its sacrificial logic, its obsession with authority, hierarchy, and rules." In the mid-eighties, however, the more fundamentalist Pentecostals turned on the "health and wealth" Pentecostals, accusing them of having lost their way. From 1985 on, Jimmy Swaggart, for one, waged a relentless campaign against prosperity theology, Pentecostal ecumenicism—its tolerance of charismatics from all kinds of churches—and its violation of traditional boundaries between the church and the world. P.T.L. was by no means his only target in this campaign, yet it represented just about everything he despised. In 1987, he accused "Christian broadcasting" of featuring " 'get-rich-quick' schemes, psychological philosophies, rock 'n' roll entertainment, and all the way down to the exhibition of homosexual guests." Bakker responded by inveighing against judgmentalism and virtually condemning Swaggart to Hell, but his fellow-pastors did not rise up in his defense. When the crisis came, he turned to Falwell, possibly because he thought the best protection from Swaggart was a real fundamentalist. But if he had been looking for punishment from a judgmental God he could hardly have found a better theological executioner. Whether by accident or not, Falwell launched his first strike against Bakker on Good Friday, and followed it up with a barrage of accusations on Easter Sunday. Falwell the man had no intention of destroying P.T.L., but Falwell the fundamentalist could hardly do otherwise.

Not just the Holy Wars but Gospelgate as a whole had an extraordinary dramatic coherence. During the spring of 1987, the telepreachers dethroned Bakker by using the only kind of scandal that could hurt him with his audience—the one scandal the *Observer* was loath to expose. By the following spring, every major figure in the piece—one or two other televangelists as well—had brought himself down by overreaching in the most characteristic fashion. In February, the televangelist Marvin Gorman, whose career Swaggart had ruined, returned the favor by having photographs taken of Swaggart with a New Orleans prostitute. The following month, Pat Robertson, who after years as the emperor of CBN had decided to run for President of the United States, found himself laughed off the campaign trail for claiming knowledge of things that were hidden to others, such as the future path of a hurricane and the presence of Soviet missiles in Cuba. By then, Falwell had abandoned P.T.L. to the bankruptcy courts, having failed to make a go of it financially. On the anniversary of Bakker's downfall, both he and Robertson were spending most of their time trying to patch up their own ministries' finances, for contributions had fallen off sharply during the year.

While none of the televangelists engaged in much public self-criticism, all these events seemed to make a deep impression on their audiences. The proof was not just that contributions to the major television ministries dropped but that leading fundamentalist and evangelical pastors around the country sounded new themes: caution and discernment in the world of politics; wariness of celebrity and the lure of worldly success; the importance of pastoral care; and the need for self-examination. In books and articles eminent pastors spoke of the "triumphalism" of fundamentalist Christians in the nineteen-eighties, and of the need to take the whole Gospel to heart.

In one sense, the fundamentalist-and-Pentecostal world was a closed system; in another, it participated in, and reflected, the society at large. There was no clearer demonstration of this than "The Jim and Tammy Show." The Bakkers were grotesques. They were caricatures. But they were the kind of caricatures that cartoonists create to portray the society. As Dave Barry wrote, they personified the most characteristic excesses of the nineteen-eighties—the greed, the love of glitz, and the shamelessness—which in their case were so pure as to almost amount to a kind of innocence. To this list could be added narcissism, the characteristic disease of the age. The Bakkers, like many people on Wall Street and in Washington, celebrated freedom from the punishing old laws and preached faith in miracles. Given that the modern economy is incomprehensible to most people, the Bakkers' version of the prosperity gospel could be seen as the cargo cult of junk-bond capitalism. What was more, the Bakkers onstage had a good deal in common with Ronald Reagan. Onstage, they were sweet, tolerant, hugely optimistic people who wished no one any ill. Like the President, too, they were stars and believers in salvation by popularity. It was surely a coincidence that Gospelgate took place in the same season as the congressional inquiry into the Iran-Contra affair. Still, Reagan had launched his secret campaign to free the American hostages in frustration over what he saw as the foreign-policy establishment's sacrificial logic, its obsession with authority, hierarchy, and rules.

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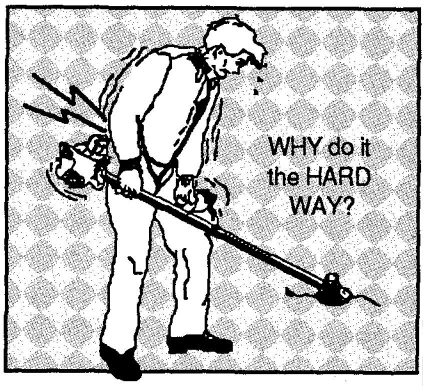
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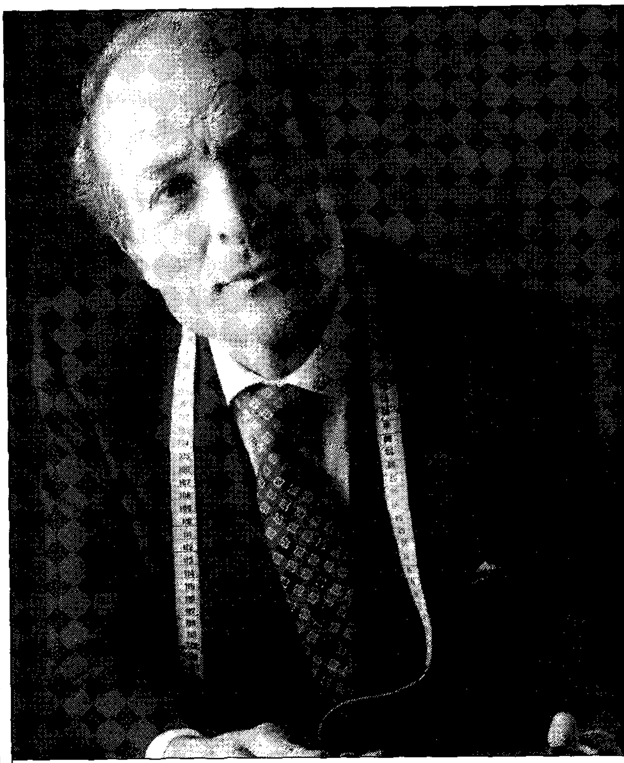
The Bakkers were exemplars of the nineteen-eighties in another way as well: being media-wise and image-conscious, they seemed to know exactly how they appeared to others. "We're a tad flamboyant," Bakker told Ted Koppel on what turned out to be the most popular "Nightline" show of the year. In the wake of Gospelgate, he and Tammy moved to Orlando, to settle in the lee of Disney World and set up a small television studio in a nearly deserted shopping mall. It was therefore just possible that the Bakkers had been impersonating rather than personifying their characters all along. Tammy's inch-thick makeup and fright wigs were certainly a mockery of the aspirations of many women in America, and Heritage USA was a parody of postmodern architecture, theme parks, historical reconstruction, and perhaps popular culture as a whole. Bakker once asked rhetorically, "Why is it we can almost enshrine a mouse, a Mickey Mouse or a Donald Duck? I mean, you hear the Mouseketeers' song . . . it's almost sung like a hymn."

Then, too, the Bakker scandal followed the course of all the other great scandals of the nineteen-eighties, from those of the Reagan Administration to those of the junk-bond empires and the savings-and-loan industry. These scandals escaped all the usual checks and safeguards. No determined public agency tracked them down, and no public outcry was raised against them, though they were virtually in plain sight for years. Given permission, they simply grew until they became too blatant to be ignored. Upon investigation, they all were found to have done serious damage: they cost the taxpayers millions or billions of dollars, and they called into question the stewardship of democracy or of religion in America. Now there were cries of outrage, and demands that the guilty be brought to justice. In all cases, however, the investigations failed to turn up anyone of sufficient stature to bear the weight of responsibility for what had occurred. This perhaps should have come as no surprise, for the empires of the nineteen-eighties were themselves insubstantial, being largely built on faith—a general but not quite innocent faith in miracles. Like vast balloons, these empires had expanded on the breath of faith until they overextended themselves and burst.

—FRANCES FITZGERALD



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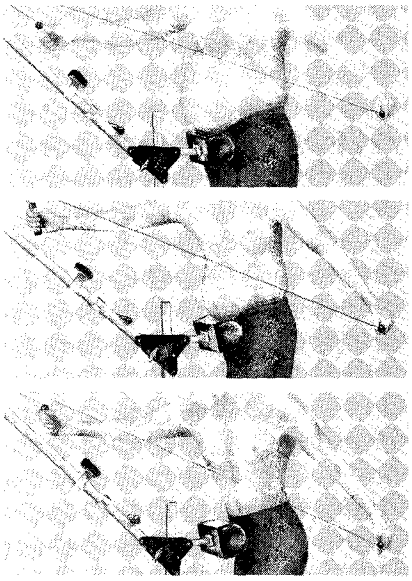

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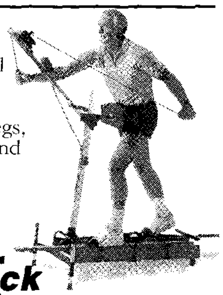

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THE THEATRE

Justice

Len Cariou, at the Lucille Lortel, plays the title role in Douglas Scott's "Mountain," which is designed, in its scattershot way, to display the nobility of character, the humor, and the style of Justice William O. Douglas, who was a towering man in every sense; and it could be argued that he treats Justice Douglas more reverentially than the admirable Alec McCowen, over at the Lamb's, treats St. Mark. That is a small matter, though, in an evening that is always fascinating, especially for those of us who cherish happy memories of the New Deal. The play is almost a solo turn for Mr. Cariou, with interruptions by John C. Vennema and Heather Summerhayes, as a number of important people Douglas encountered. Mr. Vennema's thumbnail Richard Nixon, by the way, is right on target. The play begins and ends in January, 1980, as Douglas, who recently had a mountain-climbing accident, now lies dying of a heart attack. (That title has its literal meaning, too.) We go back and forth in time, following his years as a very poor boy in Washington State who had to hitch train rides to take up a scholarship at Columbia Law School, his apprenticeship in the law, and his thirty-six years on the Court. Right from the start, he showed himself to be a man of sense and sensibility and of uncommon fealty to the Constitution, and Mr. Scott has had the good judgment to tell much of his story in Douglas's own words.

"Lifetimes on the Streets," a set of monologues written by Gus Edwards, is self-described as a "theatrical collage." The streets are the streets of Harlem, and the play, as produced by the Negro Ensemble Company, at Theatre Four, opens on a dimly lighted stage on which the shadowy figure of a man can be seen playing a saxophone behind a scrim. The beautiful, teasing music, which was recorded by Roger Byam, weaves in and out of the action from beginning to end. A woman called Mavis (Peggy Alston) enters, on her way to the hairdresser, and says that she ran into an attractive man, a painter, who invited her to have a cup of tea with him. Mavis, too, weaves in and out of the action, as her acquaintance with the man turns into love and sadness. She is followed by Douglas Turner Ward himself, the artistic director of the N.E.C. and the director of this play, as an old man carrying a large cloth bag. Shivering, he tells us that Harlem, which used to be paradise, is getting colder—a new ice age is setting in. He is followed by other residents: a hooker (Iris Little); a subway panhandler (O. L. Duke), who rushes down the aisle spouting his odd, seductive patter; a frenetic, jokey woman (Cynthia Bond), who tries to entertain us as her baby cries offstage; a patient elderly fellow (Graham Brown), who tells us how his garden grows in cracked-concrete surroundings. And so it goes. The high point comes in the second act, with the entrance of Charles Brown, a fine actor as well as a fine playwright, who appears in a blue pinstriped suit, well-shined shoes, a white shirt, and a necktie, and in a state of embarrassment. Because a homosexual friend of his has just died, he has, for the first time, wandered into a porn movie, and now, as he examines his feelings, his discomfort becomes personal and his confidence ebbs away. The evening ends with Mr. Ward again bringing sad news of these discouraging times.

The foregoing is a sketchy description of a thoroughly satisfying evening. After years of berating playwrights for writing monologues instead of conversations for the stage, I now happily eat my words at Gus Edwards' triumph. Of course, few playwrights have Mr. Edwards' acute ear, his sympathy, his humor, and, above all, his talent for inventing characters and putting together the words they speak. And few playwrights have the luck to be performed by the Negro Ensemble Company under Mr. Ward's direction. The actors I haven't mentioned—Leonard Thomas, Adam Wade, Sandra Nutt, Charles Weldon—are as able as those I have. Mr. Edwards' collage may not make a conventional play, but it does evoke a world and a way of life, as they were and as they are now. The distinguished setting was designed by Lisa L. Watson and lighted by Sandra Ross.

—Edith Oliver

CORT
THEATRE

Aspects of Vulgarity

A number of people I know have professed boredom with the prevailing critical hostility toward Andrew Lloyd Webber. It's interesting to me that none of the people who claim to be tired of reading negative reviews of "Aspects of Love" have actually seen it. In fact, I don't think it would be possible for anyone who had seen "Aspects of Love" to grow tired of reading negative reviews of it. This probably has something to do with the show's cynicism and pretentiousness.

Most musicals are about whether or not people will end up together. (The most sophisticated ones—like "Show Boat" or "Gypsy"—use this convention to explore events of greater moment.) But the 1955 novel, by David Garnett, on which Lloyd Webber has based his latest extravaganza (at the Broadhurst) is about whether or not people will have sex with each other: Will Alex (Michael Ball), a young Englishman, get it on with Rose (Ann Crumb), a French actress he has met in Montpellier between school and military service? And once Alex has spirited Rose off to his uncle's villa in Pau for a dirty fortnight will he be able to keep her there, or will Uncle George (Kevin Colson) find out about the arrangement and kick them both out? Will Rose take a fancy to Uncle George and get it on with him? And when she has become George's long-term mistress will she still be up for sex with Alex when he comes home on leave? Out of such questions Lloyd Webber tries to wring high drama, mostly by means of the sudden and vigorous crescendo. Uncle George turns out to have an Italian mistress (Kathleen Rowe McAllen), with whom Rose also has a brief fling in Act I; and Act II is concerned mainly with whether or not Alex will pursue an affair with Jenny, George and Rose's teen-age daughter (played in two versions, prepubescent and pubescent, by Deanna and Danielle Du Clos, respectively). The extraordinary thing about all this is that we are at no point told (or asked to take an interest in) anything about any of these people other than whether or not they have had or will have sexual intercourse with each other.

Crassness and superficiality are merely coarse and empty. In order for something crass or superficial to rise to vulgarity, it has to be made pretentious. "Aspects of Love" has been got up by its director, Trevor Nunn, to look like "Les Misérables." In fact, it is "Les Misérables" (Nunn's last Broadway success), rather than "Phantom of the Opera" (Lloyd Webber's), that "Aspects" most resembles, even though Nunn called on Maria Bjornson, of "Phantom," to design it. "Aspects of Love" is "sung through" (i.e., nobody just talks); it carries characters across fairly vast expanses of time and space (not without the help of treadmills); and its playbill is designed with libretto-like complexity. Characters are listed by topographical categories ("At the Fairground" or "In Venice") and song titles under chronological notations ("Two years pass . . ." or "Thirteen years later . . .").

Of course, all these things were true of "Les Misérables," too. But "Les Misérables" was a work about which it was possible to have mixed feelings. Your head told you to sneer at the predictable rhymes and the paint-by-number dramaturgy and (most of all) the mind-boggling hypocrisy of the whole thing, and you knew that it was garbage, really—a Classic Comics version of great literature. But on some level it moved you—because of the clever staging and set design, or the music, or this or that great song or production number—and when the hype had died down it was possible to develop a love-hate relationship with the show. "Aspects of Love," which offers a cheapened version of the central image in "Les Misérables"—a young man and a silver-haired gentleman vying for the spiritual possession of a little girl—has no great staging, no great numbers, and no visual imagery. It has only predictable rhymes (the lyrics are by Don Black and Charles Hart), charmless performances, and a lot of characters standing around singing the equivalent of "Please pass the butter" in recitative.

A friend of mine who saw "Aspects of Love" in London has suggested that Garnett's novel offers the perfect source material for Andrew Lloyd Webber—that a collaboration between the great schlock composer and this minor member of the Bloomsbury set represents a match made in Heaven. I don't think so. I think Gaston Leroux's turn-of-the-century thriller was the perfect material for Lloyd Webber, because of what the nineteenth-century consciousness offers to the popular imagination: you could bring with you into the theatre images and ideas that "Phantom of the Opera" didn't provide. Garnett's novel, which is concerned with only slightly more than whether or not people will have sex with each other—it's also about what they eat before and after—is itself pretty frail. Its primary appeal lies in its grasp of the authentic vocabulary of Mediterranean cuisine ("zabaglione," "piperade"); reading it, you get the feeling that if Garnett had been born a decade or two later he would have written for the style page. But the novel is inoffensive. When you try to make its trivial concerns palpable, however, with elaborate, elegant sets and music that swells and heaves, what you get is something so empty that it implodes on itself—a sort of apotheosis of vulgarity. That "Aspects of Love" seems such a gesture of desperation is almost enough to make you sorry for Lloyd Webber—almost, but not quite. At forty-two, he has a net worth that's been estimated at two hundred and forty million dollars. It's possible to buy stock in Andrew Lloyd Webber: he's converted himself into a public company, like the Duke of Plaza Toro. He is, in short, a man who has everything except real talent.

—Mimi Kramer

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THE CURRENT CINEMA

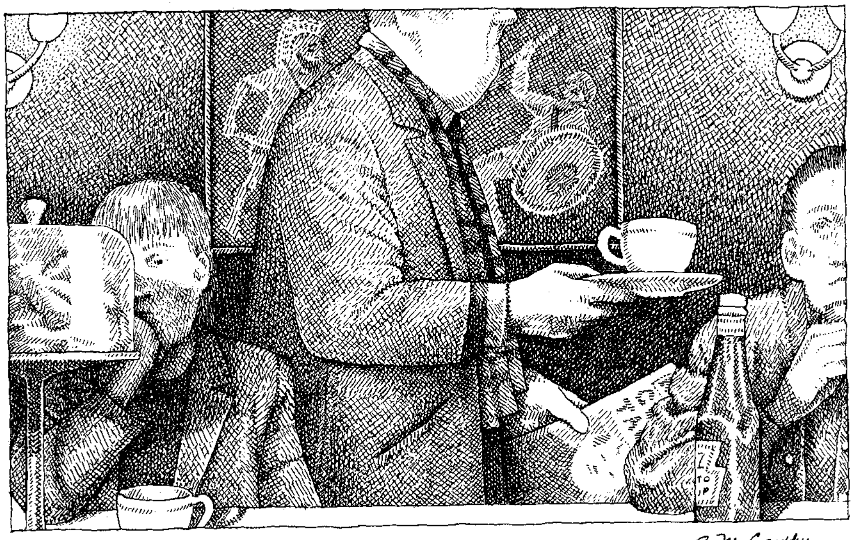
Depraved Indifference

"MIAMI BLUES" is a pungent, blithely violent thriller—a B movie that doesn't aspire, or pretend, to be anything else. The director, George Armitage, works in a style so laconic and offhand that it could almost pass for nihilistic. It's just low-key professionalism, really, but that's a refreshing quality these days. We're grateful that the movie doesn't try either to make its grungy, low-life ambience seem some kind of statement about American life or to inflate its simple narrative with grandiose action-movie effects. And Armitage's take-it-or-leave-it style nicely matches the personality of the story's main character, a chipper young psychopath called Junior Frenger (Alec Baldwin): the dominant attitude here is one of depraved indifference to human life, combined with a certain insouciant charm. "Miami Blues" wears its craftiness and its essential no-goodness proudly, like a wiry ex-con with a "Born to Lose" tattoo.

The movie begins with Junior's arrival in Miami, presented as a series of casual crimes. We see him first, on an airplane, copying signatures from obviously stolen credit cards; then, in the airport, stealing a suitcase from a sleeping woman; then nonchalantly breaking the fingers of an annoying Hare Krishna beggar. Junior's just out of prison, and he has the air of a man who knows how to enjoy himself. Using one of his hot credit cards, he checks into a fancy hotel and asks a porter to send a girl up to his suite. The hooker, Susie (Jennifer Jason Leigh), turns out to be a dim, sweet-natured amateur, a country girl working her way through junior college. They hit it off right away; later that day, Junior announces to her that they're engaged, and he moves into her apartment. Meanwhile, the police are looking for the man who assaulted the Krishna; the victim, absurdly, has died of shock. The detective in charge of the investigation is an amiable but slightly pathetic middle-aged sergeant named Hoke Moseley (Fred Ward); he lives alone in a run-down hotel, and has no teeth. (He gets a kick out of popping his dentures out and watching people's reactions.) Although Hoke sometimes acts like a bit of a buffoon, he's a competent detective, and he picks up Junior's scent fairly quickly. He turns up at Susie's apartment, invites himself to dinner, and, smiling constantly, conducts a surprisingly deft, bantering interrogation of Junior. Early the next morning, the suspect—who's no fool, either—goes to Hoke's hotel room, beats him senseless, and makes off with his gun, his badge, and his teeth.

By that point, Armitage and his actors have established a pleasing rhythm, relaxed and unpredictable. We're happy enough to amble along with them the rest of the way, even though the narrative doesn't have much urgency. Hoke feels humiliated, and he wouldn't mind getting his stuff back, but he isn't obsessed with avenging himself; Junior goes about his criminal business in his own random, impulsive way, using Hoke's gun and badge to scare off other crooks and then complete their crimes-in-progress; and Susie begins, slowly, to suspect that Junior is not keeping a promise he made to her to abandon his illegal activities. (She later explains, "I had to give him the benefit of the doubt, because he had some good qualities.") Lots of things happen; nothing has a great deal of weight. The movie has a petty thief's modesty of ambition. It never goes for the big score; it's content to keep pulling off little jobs. With a small-timer's ferrety alertness, the movie takes what it can when it can.

COUNTER TRANSFERENCE



Armitage's quick-witted, opportunistic approach is exactly right for the material. The screenplay (by Armitage) is adapted from a novel by Charles Willeford, who was a superb craftsman of pulp thrillers—a scrupulous but unfussy prose stylist, a whizz at seedy atmosphere and eccentric comedy, and a peerless creator of psychos. His novels about Hoke Moseley ("Miami Blues" was the first of four he wrote between 1984 and 1988, the year of his death) are of the genre that is known as "police procedural," but essentially they're picaresque: they consist of loosely strung anecdotes about how people get by, inside and outside the law, in the chaotic environment of present-day Miami. Armitage's background is, in a sense, the movie equivalent of Willeford's career as a writer of paperback potboilers: his directing credits include "Private Duty Nurses" (made for Roger Corman), "Hit Man," and "Vigilante Force." He knows how to keep the story moving and the action clear, how to find odd, amusing things in crummy locations, and how to stay out of the actors' way.

In this no-nonsense atmosphere, smart actors can really shine. None of the three leads in "Miami Blues" do anything showy; they're all quietly, cumulatively spectacular. Alec Baldwin gives a witty, volatile performance; his Junior is all quick reflexes and lunatic self-assurance. Fred Ward (who is one of the film's producers) seems to be having the time of his life playing this burned-out but peculiarly sunny-natured cop. Hoke is a man for whom very little goes right, in the ordinary course of things, yet Ward, with an assortment of grins (some, alarmingly, chopperless) and dirty growls, gives the character an unexpected and admirable vitality; there's a hopeful look in his eyes. And Jennifer Jason Leigh is a delight. She has the intelligence and the originality to play a dumb, childish character with absolute gravity. Susie's face always shows intense concentration; when you're not too bright, you have to bear down pretty hard to make even the simplest sense out of the world.

It's difficult to feel really excited about a movie like this, though. While it doesn't have the canned flavor of most Hollywood pictures, it isn't entirely fresh, either. Armitage has the skills to get the job done, and it's a relief to watch a picture that doesn't care whether we're impressed by it. But this is still a Corman-style B movie, designed to go nowhere, fast. "Miami Blues" is—intentionally—purely disposable entertainment, and something of a throwback to a time when a cheap, off-the-cuff action movie could be expected to turn up every week or two. (Those movies wouldn't all be as lively as this one, perhaps, but they wouldn't be different in kind.) B movies are supposed to leave you a little unsatisfied, to make you want to come back for more—the second feature, the next attraction at the drive-in, whatever. "Miami Blues" is tasty junk food, and it leaves us hungry. In a better time for movies, there would be plenty more where this one came from.

THERE'S a psycho of another color—from the opposite end of the B-movie spectrum—in John McNaughton's "Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer." This low-budget independent feature has a stark, relentless quality that is sometimes mistaken for art; the movie, originally made for the home-video market, has been "discovered" by critics at various film festivals and has had enthusiastic reviews from its recent theatrical release. But it isn't a terribly interesting movie. The film it most resembles is Leonard Kastle's "The Honeymoon Killers," which enjoyed a comparable cult success in 1970. Like that picture, "Henry" is a deliberately flat, affectless treatment of gruesome true-crime material. "The Honeymoon Killers," which was shot in low-contrast black-and-white, was an oddly memorable freak show—shocking, but with a distinctively wobbly half-lurid, half-comic tone. McNaughton's movie, loosely based on the criminal career of a mass murderer named Henry Lee Lucas, is more conventionally realistic: it's grisly, unrelieved horror. After an introductory sequence of graphic tableaux of murder victims, McNaughton gets down to the everyday life of his protagonist (Michael Rooker), a beefy, moronic-looking lug who lives in a miserable apartment with a creep named Otis (played, by Tom Towles, in a style that suggests a syphilitic Warren Oates) and Otis's sister, Becky (Tracy Arnold). The members of this depressing household drink enough beer and watch enough TV for us to figure out that this isn't just a splatter movie but, you know, a vision of America. Every now and then, Henry gets a sort of funny look in his eyes and goes out to kill somebody. Eventually, he starts taking Otis along, and Otis has a whale of a time; for a while, they videotape their exploits and watch them at home afterward. Becky thinks Henry is sweet, because he defends her from Otis's incestuous advances. Henry doesn't respond to her attempts to seduce him, though; he must have some kind of sexual problem. That's about all there is to the movie.

"Henry" plays like a hybrid of "Blood Feast" and "Stranger Than Paradise"; it mixes gore-movie carnage with Jarmusch-style aimless minimalism. (Its cleverest dialogue exchange goes like this: "Where you going?" "Nowhere. You wanna come?") It might appeal to fans of both styles. When it's over, though, and you've staggered out of the theatre, you may wonder what this queasy exercise was supposed to be all about. Sure, it's compelling; the nature of the material guarantees that. But it doesn't seem to be telling us much more than that the world is a scary place and murder is ugly. We knew those things. The most sickening murder takes place in an upper-middle-class house; we see the grim-faced Henry and the obscenely whooping Otis eliminate an entire family in their cozy living room. Is the movie also telling us that happy bourgeois homeowners should be more suspicious of lower-class beer-drinking men? "Henry," both hip and deeply conservative, is consistent only in its bad faith. It's tabloid chic.

—TERRENCE RAFFERTY

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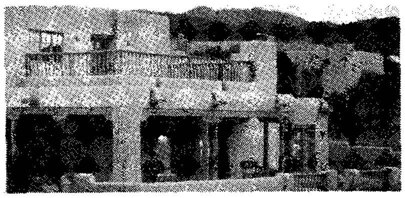

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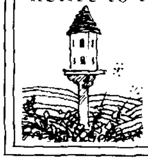

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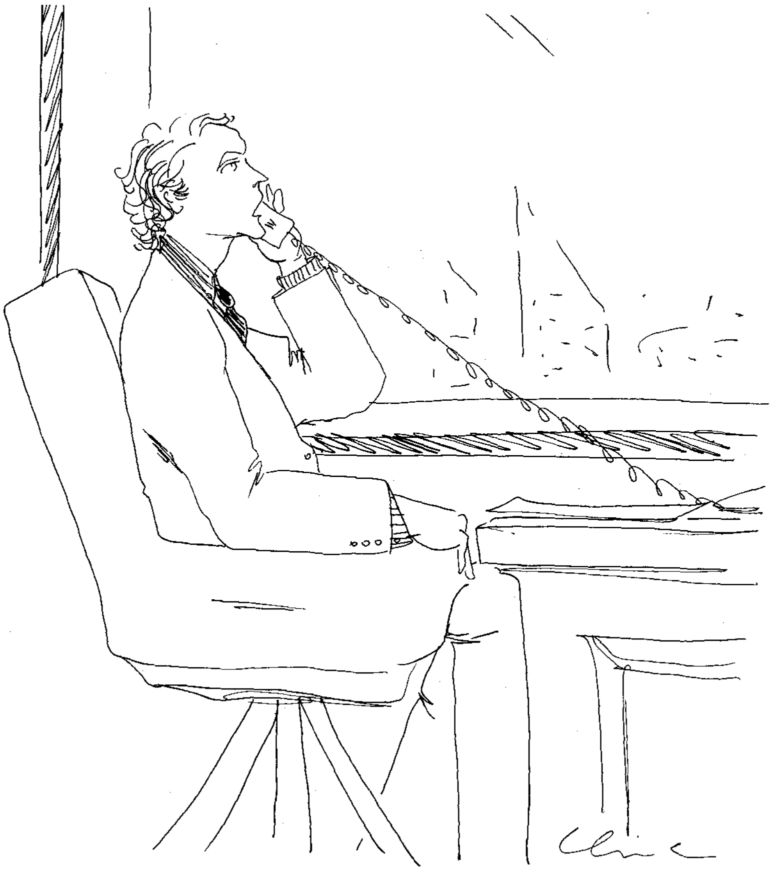
LETTER FROM JERUSALEM

Edward Gibbon said of Jerusalem, a city surrounded by a formidable medieval wall, that it derived its reputation from the number and importance of its “memorable sieges.” Gibbon was not the first or the last to wonder how in the discourse of three religions Jerusalem ever became the proverbial City of Peace. For much of its existence, it has been a city of contention and strife. The historic core, the so-called Old City, with its holy places—its renowned synagogues, churches, and mosques—and its covered bazaars filled with the religious and patriotic kitsch of two nations, is today surrounded by a modern city of some hundred and fifty thousand Palestinians and three hundred thousand Israelis. The grim medieval walls—eagerly restored by the Israeli government after the 1967 War, when the Old City was taken by Israel—bristle with battlements, bastions, and scarps, and special troops, armed with submachine guns and walkie-talkies, are forever on the lookout for Palestinian terrorists. This unlikely site was the scene, last December, of an event that astounded many who attended it. It took place on a pleasant Saturday afternoon between Chanukkah and the New Year. Yet another peace initiative had just run aground in the seemingly never-shifting sands of the Middle East. But here, for an hour or so, some thirty thousand Israelis and Palestinians held hands and formed a human chain almost three miles long all around the Old City walls, chanting, “We want peace! We want peace!”

In its long history of religious and communal strife, Jerusalem had never seen anything like it. It was the largest demonstration in the history of the city, and the first such massive event ever attended jointly by Arabs and Jews. Jerusalem in recent years had become a city with “no-go areas,” like Belfast. The mutual fears and hatreds had never been more rancorous than in the two and a half years since the outbreak of the Palestinian uprising. It was staggering to see thousands of Arabs and Jews suddenly joining hands in a common cause. The weather, as in one of those old-fashioned novels in which the mood in the sky is supposed to reflect the mood on earth, was unusually fine for the time of year. The surrounding hills and valleys—they are still known by their ancient ghostly names: Hill of Evil Counsel, Hill of Offense, Hell's Valley—gleamed in the winter sun. The ramparts stood out sharply in the soft light, as in an etching. Behind them rose the domes and towers of the Old City, where the sanctities overlap and all extremes of creed and nationality intersect but never meet. (“Jerusalem,” wrote the tenth-century Arab geographer Mukaddasi “is as a golden basin filled with scorpions.”) Everywhere around the ramparts, Palestinians and Israelis, holding hands, were singing “We Shall Live in Peace.” There were people of all classes and all ages: children; old couples with little olive branches pinned to their lapels; students and professors from Hebrew University, at Jerusalem, and from the Palestinian university, at Bir Zeit; Muslim ulemas, Reform rabbis, and priests of the Greek and Syrian Orthodox Churches; and a few hundred Italian, Dutch, and French who had travelled to Jerusalem in chartered aircraft especially for the occasion. Colored balloons floated in the sun, inscribed “1990: Time for Peace” in Hebrew, English, and Arabic. Teen-agers wore white T-shirts with stickers saying “Shalom” and “Salaam.” Some displayed placards calling for peace between “Two States for Two Independent Peoples.” Loudspeakers mounted on trucks played Israeli and Palestinian folk music. In a city haunted by its past like few others, and poisoned by demons of nationalist and religious extremism, the joint peace demonstration was an almost unbelievable sight. The police presence in the city had been nearly doubled for the occasion—on the assumption, it seemed, that in a city like Jerusalem nothing was more dangerous than peace. For a week or so before the joint demonstration, right-wing Israeli politicians had been clamoring that it was “subversive,” even that it was financed and organized by terrorist organizations abroad. The government, too, had taken a dim view of the demonstration, but had been unable or unwilling to outlaw it. Armed policemen were posted, facing the participants, every ten or twenty yards along the human chain.

The demonstration remained orderly and calm until, toward the end, Arab teen-agers outside Herod's Gate, at the northeastern corner of the Old City, started a commotion—shouting what the police said were “Palestinian nationalist slogans.” The police



“Kathy, I'm updating my files. Do you still love me?”

had been on edge throughout and, according to subsequent reports in the local press, openly hostile toward the participants. A story later in the week in the Tel Aviv daily *Ha'aretz* noted that the police buildup had been "offensive, not defensive, from the start." The policemen had been issued not shields, as is common in a riot situation, but guns and pistols. When the teen-agers started shouting those slogans, the police overreacted. They intervened massively with tear gas and water cannons and wooden clubs—not only against the shouting teen-agers but against a much wider segment of the human chain. At one point along the north wall, I saw policemen firing rubber bullets at a crowd of middle-aged men and women chanting, "We want peace." Elsewhere around the Old City, the human chain continued in happy ignorance of what was happening between Herod's and Damascus Gates. There two or three thousand people were trapped in clouds of tear gas among mounted police wielding wooden clubs. Some thirty people were left wounded. An Italian woman who was watching the demonstration through a window in the hall of a nearby hotel lost an eye; apparently, she had been struck by glass shattered either by plastic bullets or by a water cannon. Another Italian, a deputy of the European Parliament, was later quoted on television as saying that if that was how the police treated foreign visitors it was easy to imagine how brutal they might be with their own.

THE human chain around the Old City was the brainchild of a mainstream Israeli civic body called Peace Now. It is not the only extra-parliamentary protest movement in Israel today; there are at least two dozen. But it is the oldest and by far the largest, with roots in traditional élite groups of Israeli society. Now in its twelfth year, it is still without any formal membership list and only recently for the first time a couple of youngsters were hired as permanent staff. It has its chief strongholds in the universities, the arts, the kibbutzim, the news media, the Army reserves, and the middle and upper middle classes of European origin in the big cities. Peace Now was founded in 1978, a few months after Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's dramatic visit

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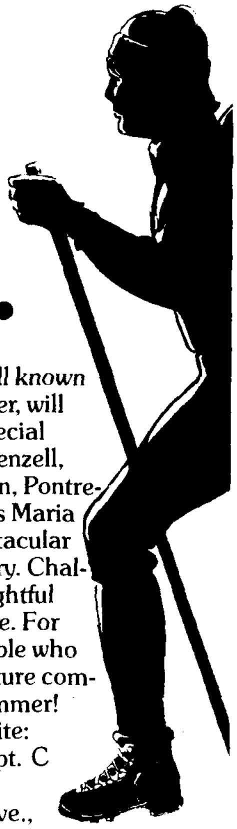

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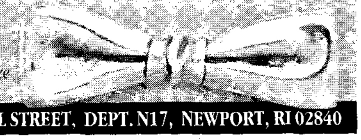

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to Jerusalem. It did not have a formal beginning but was indirectly triggered by an open letter to Prime Minister Menachem Begin signed by some three hundred and fifty reserve officers in the Israeli Army. All were men still serving annual stints of up to six weeks in the reserves, often in élite combat units; a few were bearers of the highest decorations for bravery in action. In their letter they warned the Prime Minister against establishing more Israeli settlements in the territories occupied in the 1967 War, since doing so might undermine the historic opportunity that Sadat's initiative had opened for a resolution of the century-long armed conflict between Jews and Arabs. The signers told the Prime Minister that they preferred a smaller Israel at peace with its neighbors to a "Greater Israel" at permanent war. They wanted him to know that any other policy would arouse in them, citizen-soldiers serving in the Army reserves, "doubts as to the justice of our cause." The letter continued, "Real security can be achieved only in peace. The real strength of the Israeli Army grows out of the citizen-soldiers' identification with state policy."

The appeal was meant to be a one-time effort. It was quickly dubbed in the press "the officers' letter," and it scandalized a country traditionally conformist in matters of military security. The signers were immediately attacked by pro-government figures as "traitors" (by Interior Minister Yosef Burg), as "primitives" (by Moshe Arens, today the Foreign Minister), and as "paid hirelings of the C.I.A." (by Ronni Milo, today the Minister of Labor and Social Welfare). Simha Ehrlich, Begin's Finance Minister, accused the officers of planning a "coup d'état." A Knesset member accused them of spreading a "peace disease" in the body politic. Eldad Scheib, a well-known right-wing intellectual, decried what he called the fashionable addiction to "Nowism," which he said was a mark of narcissistic decadence, since true pleasure invariably grew out of "delaying" satisfaction.

Former Foreign Minister Abba Eban and former Premier Golda Meir, on the other hand, applauded the officers for their letter. Out of the resulting debate a mass movement grew almost inadvertently, without offices or officeholders and without a single paid official—a vocal, often highly visible extraparliamentary body with a remarkable capacity for arousing public opinion. Prime Minister Begin on one occasion confessed that when the peace negotiations at Camp David with President Sadat broke down, as they often did, he would remember the peace demonstrators back home. Thousands had accompanied him to the airport on his way to America with placards that read "Go in Peace, and Come Back with Peace." "They were often on my mind," he said.

Although Peace Now was launched by a group of young reserve officers—all were men, in their twenties or early thirties—it quickly attracted both older and younger men and women. Soon there were more women than men. Supported entirely by members' contributions, it was a "single-issue" movement—the issue was peace. Its activists believed that after four Arab-Israeli wars peace was within reach not only with Egypt but with Jordan and the Palestinians as well, the price being a readiness to withdraw from territories occupied in the 1967 War. Tens of thousands attended the first Peace Now rallies and protest marches. The peak came in 1982, when a mass meeting outside the Tel Aviv city hall which was sponsored by Peace Now to protest the massacre at the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps brought out nearly four hundred thousand people—one in ten of Israel's entire population. The government had been refusing to appoint a commission to investigate the massacre, on the ground that, as Prime Minister Begin put it, when "goyim kill goyim they come to hang the Jew." After the mass rally, the government relented. An official commission found Defense Minister Ariel Sharon indirectly responsible for the massacre. Sharon was forced to resign.

Peace Now was founded in Jerusalem, and it is still centered in Jerusalem, because its main activists happen to live there. This is probably no accident. Unlike Tel Aviv, Israel's largest city on the Mediterranean coast, Jerusalem is a mixed Israeli-Palestinian city and is in the very eye of the storm. In the coastal plain, the majority of Israelis still live almost unaffected by the Arab-Israeli conflict. In Jerusalem, it is impossible to avoid it. For months during the bloody aftermath of the invasion of Lebanon, Peace Now militants maintained a permanent vigil outside Begin's official residence, on Balfour Street, to protest the continuing bloodshed and to demand the immediate withdrawal of Israeli forces. Each day they held up large wooden boards inscribed with the number of Israeli casualties to date. The number grew. Begin passed by that placard several times a day. It was impossible to ignore it. Soon after the number passed five hundred, Begin resigned. He has never explained his decision, but the persistence of the vigil, with its morbid signs, is often cited as a contributing factor. (Begin, apparently in a state of deep depression, has remained behind shuttered windows since 1983, refusing to leave his house or to meet with or talk on the telephone to anybody except closest relatives and friends.)

Extraparliamentary movements usually have short life spans. The relative longevity of Peace Now has often been commented on. It may reflect a deep malaise in a country where "consensus" has been a political fetish for years. Abba Eban once defined consensus as that which "many people say in chorus but do not believe as individuals." Extraparliamentary protest movements have emerged on the far right as well, but remain smaller. The resort to extraparliamentary action both on the left and on the right may be the result of a flaw in a political system that never produces clear-cut majorities and in which the main issues are discussed in doubletalk, because the two main parties are tempted to share the spoils of power within wall-to-wall national coalitions. According to a recent study by Professor S. Lehman-Wilzig, of Bar-Ilan University, near Tel Aviv, there has been a fivefold rise in the number of demonstrations in Israel since 1960. The great increase, he writes, is due to a feeling that "there are no other means for a citizen to express his opinions to the authorities."

The most trying days for Peace Now came soon after the Lebanon War: in February, 1983, one of its leading activists, a young graduate student named Emil Grunzweig, was killed when a right-wing fanatic threw a hand grenade into an antiwar demonstration in Jerusalem. The murderer was apprehended and received a life sentence. "We always knew there was a price to pay," Tsali Reshef, who had helped draft the officers' letter in 1978

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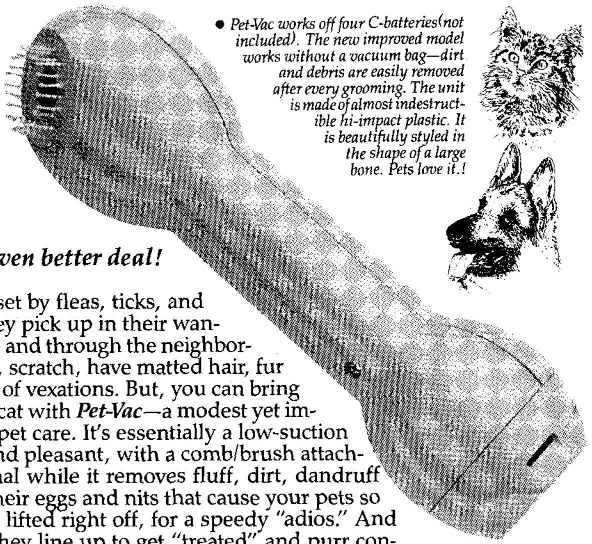

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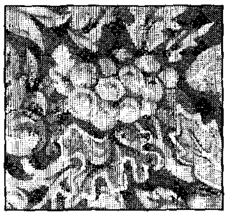

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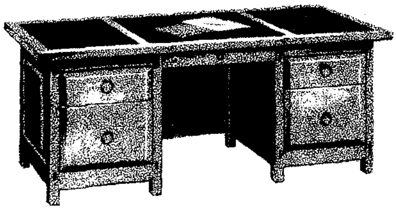

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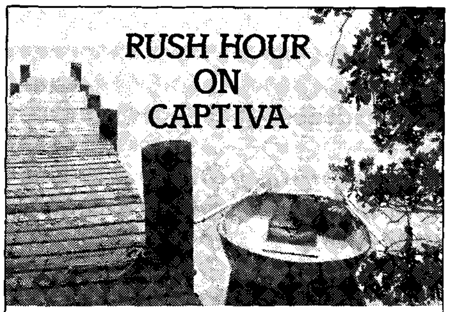
and is today a Jerusalem corporation lawyer, told me. "But we did not think it would be a human life." After Grunzweig's death, Peace Now grew more radical. The polite, almost diffident style of the officers' letter gave way to bolder protests. The demonstrators now protested the indiscriminate bombing of targets in Lebanon from the air. Peace Now had always opposed the establishment of further Israeli settlements on the occupied West Bank and in the Gaza Strip; it now addressed itself increasingly to the growing number of human-rights violations in the territories. Peace Now demonstrators protested the practice of administrative detention without trial and the imposition of collective punishments, the most extreme being the demolition of the homes of suspects even before trial. "DON'T BE COMPLACENT! DON'T STAND ASIDE!" Israelis were urged in Peace Now's leaflets and posters. "Demolition of family homes is a barbaric punishment," Professor Galia Golan, a Hebrew University Sovietologist and veteran Peace Now activist, told me. "Administrative detention without trial is just as bad," she added. "You are taken out of your bed in the middle of the night. They throw a hood over your head and lead you away. Then they throw you into an overcrowded cell for practically indefinite periods without being charged, without trial, without even being told what you are accused of."

Before the P.L.O. recognized Israel and renounced terrorism, in 1988, Peace Now had generally voiced support for the rights of the Palestinian people to a "national existence." After its November, 1988, campaign, it called on Israel to "talk *peace* with the P.L.O. *now*" and agree to the establishment of a Palestinian state next to Israel. Almost a hundred thousand demonstrators attended the rally, in Tel Aviv, where this appeal was launched. "Let's change course now," said a recent Peace Now appeal, for which it was soliciting signatures all over Israel. "The violent events in the territories prove that only a political settlement [with the Palestinians] will free us from the vicious circle of violence—the result of our continued domination of over one and a half million Palestinians. Let us act now, before it is too late." An attempt to make Palestinians from the territories working in Israel proper wear identifying tags was thwarted by Peace Now sympathizers, who threatened to wear such badges themselves. Last fall, Peace Now militants staged a vigil outside Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's home to protest the daily death toll in the occupied territories. It lasted for several months. Once again, as in 1983, a large placard was displayed, this time with the current number of Palestinians shot dead in the occupied territories by Israeli troops. (At year's end, the number of Palestinians killed by Israeli troops since the beginning of the *intifada* was six hundred and nine, according to the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, and the figure included a hundred and thirty-six children, forty of them under the age of twelve.)

"On the West Bank and in Gaza, Israel finds itself in the situation of a classic colonial power," Avishai Margalit, a philosophy professor at the Hebrew University and a member of the current Peace Now leadership group, told me. "We must make peace with the Palestinians and get out of there as soon as possible." On the day before I talked with Margalit, Prime Minister Shamir had declared that he was ready to talk to anybody, even to the Devil, but not to the men of the P.L.O. "Peace you negotiate with enemies," Margalit said. "Otherwise, there would be no need for it. Instead of questioning the legitimacy of the P.L.O., we should put its sincerity to the test."

AMONG Peace Now's main spokesmen during the past ten years have been some of the country's best-known writers (Amos Oz, A. B. Yehoshua), former Air Force generals, leading actors and actresses (one was Hanna Maron, herself the victim, in 1970, of a Palestinian terrorist attack on the passengers of an Israeli airliner at the Munich airport), a former director general of the Foreign Ministry, a president of the National Academy, and a president of the Weizmann Institute of Science. The movement has attracted some of the best-known university professors, including the economists Michael Bruno, now the governor of the Bank of Israel, and Yoram Ben Porath, now the rector of Hebrew University. Ben



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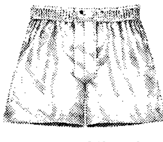

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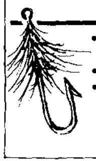

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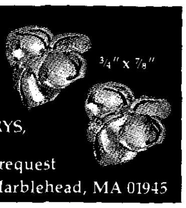

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Porath wrote several of Peace Now's most widely known pamphlets and slogans. Abba Eban, the grand old man of Israeli diplomacy, has helped raise funds for Peace Now in the United States. A few years ago, Eban and a group of European and Israeli parliamentarians nominated Peace Now for the Nobel Prize. "Peace Now has made a difference," Eban told me recently. "It helps retain a measure of sanity in this country . . . it has stepped in, vigorously, where Labor [Eban's own party] tended to fail because of shortsightedness and indecision." Labor's leaders resemble Hamlet "except in the felicity of their language," Eban said. He went on to say that they were like Molière's Don Juan, who promised marriage to many women and tried to avoid being pinned down by any of them, and that they followed "the drumbeat of political opportunism rather than the voice of conscience."

Peace Now's establishment was warmly greeted in the United States by Saul Bellow and the economist Kenneth Arrow, among others. Today, there are supporting chapters of Peace Now in the United States and in several European countries. I recently spoke to Mark Rosenblum, a historian at Queens College who coördinates some twenty of those chapters in the United States and Canada. "In our publications we tell Jewish community leaders in America that they can serve Israel better by criticizing than by not criticizing her," he said. When the first chapters were set up in America, according to Mr. Rosenblum, he received so many threats from Jewish Defense League militants and other fanatics that he felt constrained to use a screening device to open his mail. He cited recent polls that seem to indicate that seventy-six per cent of American Jewish leaders now favor Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories in return for peace, seventy-three per cent support negotiations with the P.L.O., and fifty-three per cent support the establishment of a Palestinian state.

When Allen Ginsberg was in Israel on a reading tour in 1988, he was asked again and again to read his 1974 poem "Jaweh and Allah Battle." One night he read it at a Peace Now rally in Tel Aviv that was attended by some eighty thousand people. Some people in the

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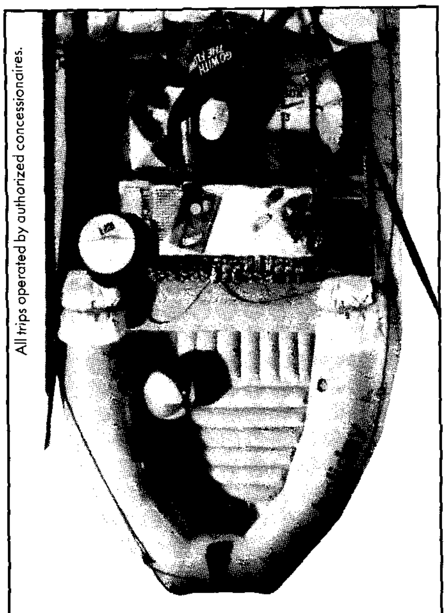

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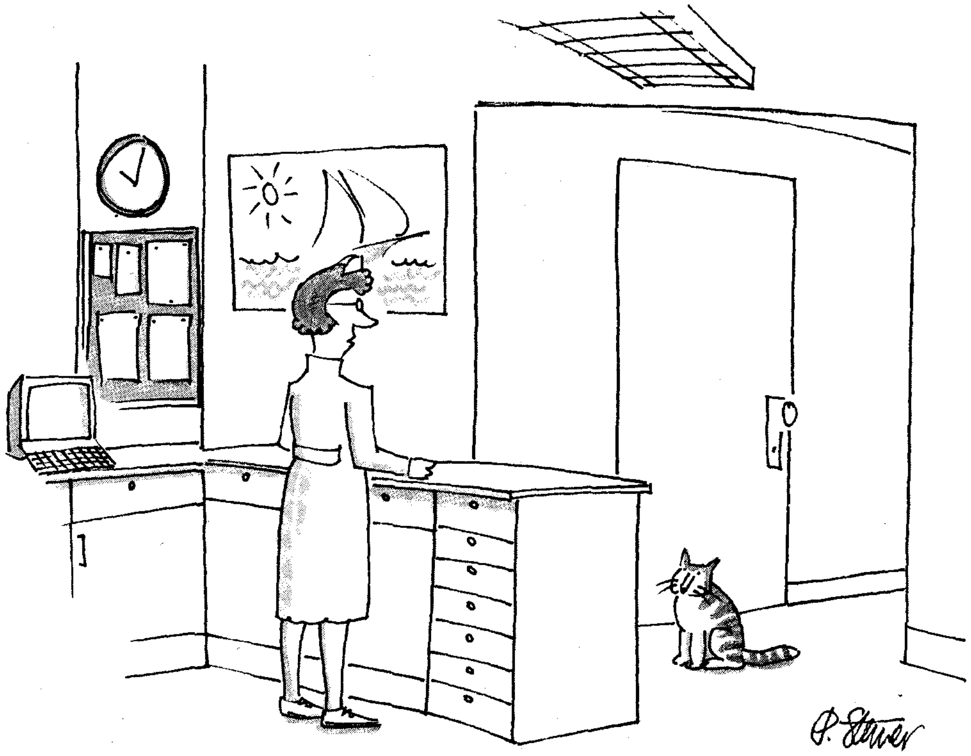

"The patient in 12-C needs comforting."

vast crowd felt that the poem, written soon after the Yom Kippur War, still encapsulated much of the current tragedy and madness:

Jaweh with Atom Bomb
Allah cuts throat of Infidels . . .
HITLER AND STALIN SENT ME HERE!
WEIZMANN & BEN-GURION SENT ME HERE!
NASSER AND SADAT SENT ME HERE!
ARAFAT SENT ME HERE! MESSIAH SENT ME HERE!
GOD SENT ME HERE!
Buchenwald sent me here! Vietnam sent me here!
Mylai sent me here! Lidice sent me here!
My mother sent me here!
I WAS BORN HERE IN ISRAEL, Arab
circumcised, my father had a coffee shop in Jerusalem
One day the Soldiers came & told me to walk down road my hands up
walk away leave my house business forever! . . .
JAWEH AND ALLAH SENT ME HERE!

Though Peace Now has grown more radical in recent years, it is still not a protest movement in the American mode at the time of the Vietnam War. It opposes the government's policies, but its activists don't burn draft cards or national flags. They insist they are patriots. They have not until now advocated draft dodging, but one of the leaders, the historian Mordechai Bar-On—a colonel in the Army reserve and a former Knesset deputy—now says he "understands," and even "sympathizes with," reservists and recruits who choose to go to prison rather than serve in the occupied territories, shooting children who throw stones at them. The number of such reservists reached a hundred early in March. One had received five consecutive prison sentences for continuing to disobey his call-up order. He was not an "intellectual," like most of the others, but a masseur. After his fifth conviction, the Army relented and posted him to guard duty outside Jerusalem. Many of the refuseniks are affiliated with another Israeli protest movement, named Yesh Gvul (a Hebrew pun, meaning both "Enough is enough" and "There is a border here"). Yesh Gvul offers them legal aid and some financial assistance, through a pacifist foundation based in Berkeley, California. A recent Yesh Gvul poster showed a blood-red flower superimposed on the face of a small child blinded in one eye, presumably by a rubber bullet fired by an Israeli soldier on the occupied West Bank. The inscription read, "Daddy, what are you doing in the occupied territories?" And, "Bring the soldiers home." Amnesty International recently recognized some Yesh Gvul members as "prisoners of conscience"—not only the convinced pacifists but also those imprisoned for "selective" or "partial" refusal to serve in an army. As Amnesty International now puts it, one's reasons for objecting to conscription can be other than total pacifism. Political reasons in a particular conflict or in a particular place are just as legitimate, Amnesty International says.

The relatively low number of soldiers who have gone to jail for refusing to serve in the occupied territories has been cited by official spokesmen as proof that the phenomenon of "selective refusal" is insignificant. The real number of refuseniks, however, is widely thought to be much higher. A study published recently in the Tel Aviv daily *Yediot Ahronot* highlighted what it called "the gray refusal"—refusal that never reaches the courts and public knowledge. For every convicted refusenik, the paper said, there are ten "gray refuseniks," who avoid reserve duty in the territories with the tacit connivance of sympathetic commanding officers. And for every "gray refusenik," the paper went on, there are another ten who manage the same result by feigning illness or going abroad for a few days, to nearby Cyprus or Egypt, when they expect to be called up. As the Palestinian uprising entered its third year, the mood among young recruits might also be gauged by a sudden rise in the number of suicides. Twice as many recruits killed themselves in 1989 as in 1988.

I asked a well-known Peace Now veteran if he planned to do his annual stint as a reservist in a paratrooper brigade. He shrugged, and said, "Do I have a choice?"

"In the territories?"

"It's been only once so far. Let's hope it won't be again."

"And if you are called up again?"

"I'll try and argue them out of it. But I don't think I'd refuse. I don't believe that refusing to go serves our cause. I'll certainly refuse to obey orders that are manifestly illegal—that's my duty under the prevailing law. I'll try and behave like a mensch."

Yesh Gvul and some more radical dissident groups—there are at least half a dozen—often mock and occasionally criticize Peace Now activists for continuing to serve in the territories. During the Lebanon War, Yesh Gvul sometimes reviled the men of Peace Now for feeling they had to march into Beirut as good, disciplined soldiers before they came out to demonstrate, outside Begin's home, against war. During that war, Simon Avidan, a retired general who had become a legendary figure during Israel's war of independence, said he was proud of the draft dodgers who followed the call of conscience: "Our soldiers are not like German soldiers, who were told to obey blindly." The issue still dominates the debate among the various protest groups.

"We will not at this stage advocate draft dodging," said Bar-On, who himself served in Lebanon during the 1982 war. Bar-On was fifty-three years old at the time and had been assigned to accompany prominent foreign politicians and columnists to the Lebanese front. "I gave them the official line about that war," Bar-On told me. "Then I would tell them what I myself thought about it." Perhaps only in the Israeli Army would a well-known peacenik like Bar-On be assigned such a duty. When the fact became public, the hawkish chairman of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee criticized the chief of staff for allowing a man like Bar-On "to poison the atmosphere." But Bar-On was not removed from his post.

BAR-ON said that Peace Now's position on refusal to serve was political, not moral. "We are taken seriously by Army leaders, by politicians, and by a large segment of public opinion precisely because we remain within the system," he told me. "If we lose that credibility, we'll cease being politically effective. We want to be effective. It's our raison d'être. Also, we still believe in the rule of law. We don't want to undermine the rule of law in this country, where too many fanatics don't believe in it. We still believe that in the end the political system will gravitate into our camp." After a brief pause, he mused, "If I knew that tomorrow two thousand reservists would publicly refuse service in the territories—and stand trial for it—I might change my mind. Two thousand open refuseniks might mean the end of the occupation. Right now, advocating refusal would be not only wrong but counterproductive."

Avishai Margalit put the same idea this way: "Israel is a curious country: half supermodern, half sorely backward; a tribe rather than a state; a *mishpocha*. We are part of that tribe. We are not a passing bunch of aesthetes or beautiful souls; we are rooted in this odd society. Army service here is often like a primitive tribal-initiation rite. It is a main socializing agent. Where else would you see entire families accompanying their children to the draft board? Or visiting them once a week in camp with food parcels and fresh underwear? Our main strength at the moment is in the Army—among young recruits and reservists. Not that it's not important to be moral witnesses, too. It's very important. But our task is different from that of, say, Václav Havel in Czechoslovakia. If we haven't yet moved public opinion as much as we would like, that doesn't mean we will not be more successful tomorrow."

Nor has Peace Now yet practiced "confrontation tactics," as protest movements have done elsewhere. The demonstrations are, as a rule, coördinated with the police. The placards at the most recent demonstrations have said of the P.L.O., "DON'T JAIL THEM! TALK TO THEM." Peace Now has tried hard, with mixed results so far, to de-demonize the Palestinians, whom Begin once called "two-legged animals." An American professor attending a Peace Now rally last year noted with surprise that the demonstrators who advocated talks with the P.L.O. were waving national flags. His surprise grew as they concluded their rally by singing the national anthem. (When the eighteen-year-old son of a leading Peace Now activist was recently dropped from one of the more rigid courses for Army officers because of a minor disciplinary offense—he had neglected to shave—his mother, who had high-ranking political and military acquaintances, moved heaven and earth to get him readmitted. The incident threw light on Peace Now's curious position—both within and without the Israeli power élite—which can be both a strength and a weakness.)

THE founders of modern Israel, in the nineteen-twenties, were pioneers of the social-democratic ethic of equality between the sexes. Sixty and seventy years later, Israel was steeped in conservative, macho, or religiously motivated bias, deviating dramatically from contemporary American and European practice. Women's equality has been one of the great myths of the

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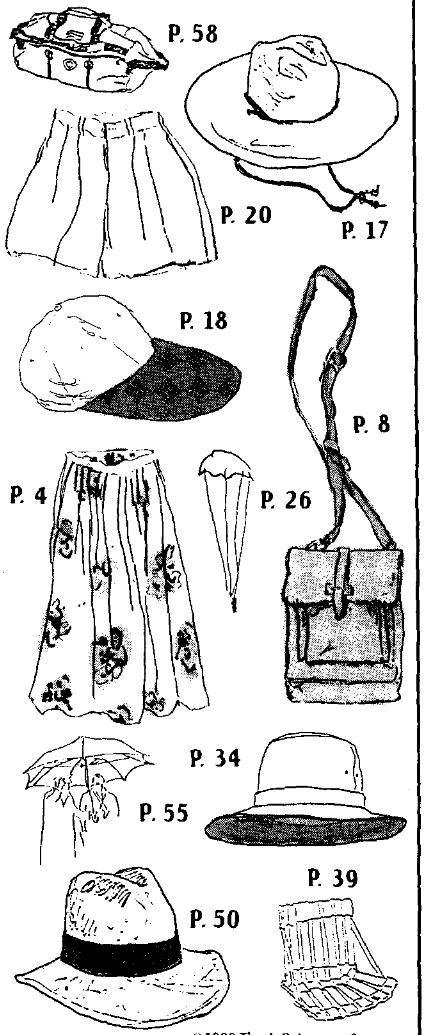

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Israeli image-making industry. The militarization of society and public life as a result of the continuous state of war has contributed strongly to the erosion of women's status. In the upper echelons of business and government, the premium has been put on military background. Women do serve in the Army, in supporting, non-combat posts—mostly as clerks and social workers—but they have found it increasingly difficult over the years to break into the political system or get top jobs in business. In the Cabinet that fell in last month's government crisis, there were five ex-generals but not a single woman. The number of women in the parliament has eroded from eleven per cent at independence to 5.8 per cent today—an all-time low. The salary differential between men and women in the public sector, according to Naomi Chazan, a professor of political science at Hebrew University, has grown in the past decade from twenty-two per cent to twenty-nine.

In its early days, Peace Now reflected the fact, or the fear, of this prevailing prejudice. Only males—combat soldiers and certified military heroes—were allowed to sign the officers' letter or appear on the speakers' platform during Peace Now mass rallies. Peace as well as war was a man's game. A woman named Yuli Tamir, who teaches philosophy at Tel Aviv University, served two and a half years as a lieutenant in the Army intelligence corps, much of the time at an electronic listening post close to the Suez Canal before and during the Yom Kippur War. One of the founders of Peace Now, in 1978, she participated in the formulation of the officers' letter but was not permitted to sign it. "The men thought it would be absolutely terrible if a woman signed it, too," Tamir recalled recently, with a smile. "They were sure a woman's name would fatally weaken its political and moral impact." The political vernacular of the hawkish right has been dominated by male sexual imagery. It still issues dire warnings against the "castration" of the state through "withdrawal" or the "amputation" of parts, and exhortations to remember that what does not grow "shrinks."

In the extraparliamentary peace movements, however, the role of women has changed considerably. These movements are said to be increasingly dominated by women, and women militants are said to have been responsible for pushing Peace Now further toward the radical left. The influence of women in Israeli peace groups has been seen by some as proof of the burden imposed on women by the wars. Israel's Citizens Rights Movement was also founded by a woman, Shulamit Aloni; she is now one of the few remaining women members of the Knesset. Voting patterns have changed in recent years: many more women than men are now voting in support of compromise and talks with the P.L.O., according to Professor Chazan. The Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories has pushed women to even greater involvement in radical peace groups. The uprising is not merely an impersonal battle between armies and machines; it has added an intimate, human dimension to the conflict—teen-agers throw stones at soldiers, many of them teen-agers themselves. A dozen or so women's groups clamoring militantly for peace have sprung up as a result, and can now be encountered regularly in the streets and squares of the main cities. A few years ago, David Shipler, in a book rich in insights, entitled "Arab and Jew: Wounded Spirits in a Promised Land," warned the parties to this conflict that they "will not find peace in treaties, or in victories" but "will find it, if at all, by looking into each other's eyes." That is what one new group, the Israel Women's Peace Network, is trying to encourage. The Network is a coalition of several women's nonpolitical service organizations. It is establishing encounter groups to enable Palestinian and Israeli women to meet and discuss the need for recognition of one another's human rights. The police recently tried to prevent the Women's Network from holding a joint demonstration of Palestinian and Israeli women in Jerusalem on the ground that it might lead to civic unrest, as the human chain had done a few weeks before. Lawyers for the Network appealed to the Supreme Court and won. The demonstration duly took place the next day. It was attended by hundreds of Palestinian and Israeli women, among them Tamar Bar-Lev, the wife of the Minister of Police, who had tried to outlaw it. The women attending signed a declaration calling for peace negotiations between Israel and the P.L.O.

Another group is called the Women in Black. They, too, practice a kind of "anti-politics"; that is, their declared wish is to be guided by moral principle and a concern for human rights rather than political opportunism. Every Friday afternoon, rain or shine, groups of women dressed entirely in black gather for one hour at busy intersections in twenty Israeli cities and towns. Theirs is the longest regularly sustained protest activity so far. The solemn vigils have become features of the urban scene. In their sombre dignity, the women in black are reminiscent of the Buenos Aires Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo. Their lament is marked by a silent eloquence. The black clothing, they have explained, symbolizes the tragedy of both peoples, Israeli and Palestinian. Quietly, on little placards they hold, they call for an end to the mutual bloodshed, an end to the killing of children, and for peace talks with the Palestinians—only to be regularly heckled (and occasionally spat on) by burly men who call them "whores" and "Arab-fuckers."

MUCH of the argument today between Palestinians and Israelis is over the compounded results of five wars (and many bloody skirmishes in between), rather than over any earlier grievances. How to succeed in preaching moderation and compromise in the heated atmosphere generated by those wars—that is the problem the protest groups face. None claim they have found satisfactory answers. Democracies are notorious for a tendency to obey the feelings rather than the mind; thus the nature of democracies often makes it difficult to conclude a peace after a hard-won war. Generous victors are rare. The difficulties of Peace Now and of other protest groups are exacerbated by the absence so far of similar groupings in the neighboring Arab states (though not on the occupied West Bank or in the Gaza Strip). Janet Aviad, an American-born sociologist, who is Peace Now's national treasurer, told me she is often a bit tired. "This activity is quite exhausting," she said. "I am down, anyway. I have a twenty-year-old boy in the Army." She confessed that she was often very pessimistic, but only for the immediate future. "For the long run I am hopeful. Perhaps it's irrational.

Sometimes I think this issue will be decided in the streets of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv—as the Czechoslovak issue recently was in the streets of Prague. I believe in the unexpected. Would you have expected what has happened this past year all over the world, from Eastern Europe to South Africa? Nothing was foreseen here, either: not the war of 1967, when we won the territories that we should now trade for peace, and not that of 1973; neither Sadat's journey to Jerusalem nor the P.L.O.'s volte-face in 1988."

Nor did anyone foresee the breakup last month of Israel's national coalition government, so soon after its formation, over the issue of negotiations with the Palestinians. The circumstances of that breakup and the subsequent outrageous or farcical maneuvers to establish another government will likely further discredit the present Israeli parliamentary system in the public eye and encourage extraparliamentary agitation of all sorts, above all for peace and electoral reforms. The tens of thousands of outraged citizens who took to the streets earlier this month to protest the "system" and to demand far-reaching changes—including the adoption of a constitution (Israel still has none) and a bill of rights—were an indication of things to come. Whatever government rules Israel in the near future is likely to be weak, unstable, paralyzed, and short-lived. Some observers were led last week to predict the beginning of the end of Israel's First Republic. What the Second Republic would look like was anybody's guess.

Before the most recent crisis, Aviad and other Peace Now activists would meet regularly with Knesset members and government ministers to plead their cause. Last year, Avishai Margalit visited the then Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin in his office. Rabin is known in his Labor Party as a hard-liner, and the discussion apparently became heated. Rabin, irritated, at one point turned to Margalit and snapped, "Who are you to tell us what to do? How many votes does Peace Now have?"

Margalit, according to a witness, replied, "Maybe we don't have the votes. We do have the historians. They will have the last word in the future, when today's disorders will be tidied up into books." Rabin, according to this source, seemed taken aback.

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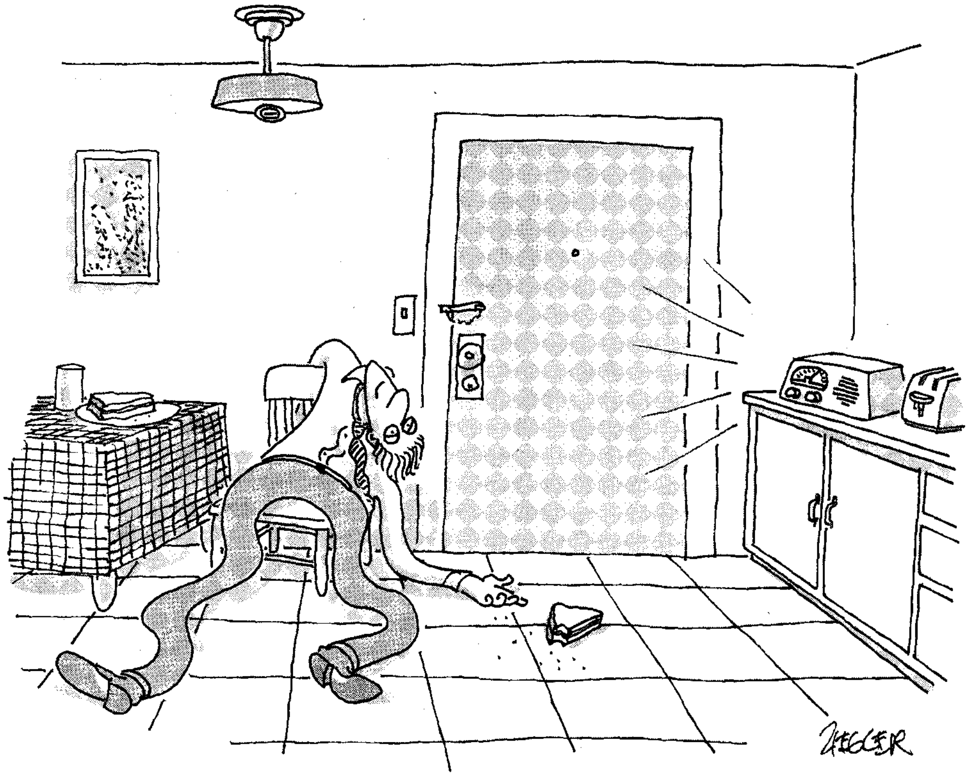
AROUND CITY HALL

Happy Land

David Dinkins completed his first hundred days as New York's mayor on April 10th. In press conferences and interviews during the previous several days, he had fielded questions about what, in his view, had been the pluses and minuses of his first months at City Hall. In terms of New York's future, by far the most significant questions concerned the city's dramatically worsened financial state, which had come to him as a rude surprise. Last July, Dinkins pointed out, Mayor Edward Koch had announced—without challenge from any fiscal monitors—that the city had a balanced budget for the fiscal year that ends on June 30th. By November, revenues had fallen to the point where the former mayor had to reduce proposed expenditures by more than half a billion dollars. Still, in December income-tax revenues were running ten per cent ahead of schedule. However, since Dinkins took office, the plunge in the amount of money coming in has been so great that he has had to adjust city expenses to accommodate an additional gap of three-quarters of a billion dollars. If the downward trend continues, the city will have to take measures, including the raising of taxes, to balance a projected difference of as much as two billion dollars between revenues and expenses in the budget for the coming fiscal year. Dinkins was nevertheless able to point out with some pride that the city's standing with the bond-rating agencies—unlike that of New York State—had thus far held steady. The Mayor, whose major opponents in last year's campaign had frequently suggested that he was just not up to the job at City Hall, took special satisfaction in a recent poll showing that fifty-six per cent of all New Yorkers gave good or excellent marks to his performance in office. On being reminded that a reporter—as it happened, a non-tennis player—had described his mayoral style as being, like his tennis game, overcautious and too deliberate, he took primary offense at the slur on his tennis game. "I don't have a big serve," he said, but in returning the ball "I take all kinds of chances—I go all out for it." When he was asked to name his biggest mistake as mayor, he said that the future would be the judge of that. "As a friend of mine says"—he meant the Reverend Jesse Jackson—" 'God is not finished with me yet.' " However, the subject that came up most frequently, and clearly caused him the most pain to discuss, was the March 25th fire at the Happy Land Social Club, in the Bronx: the second-worst building fire in city history, in which eighty-seven people died—twenty more than in last fall's California earthquake.



"You've been listening to the mellow sound of Station EZZZ."

The Mayor's schedule that is handed out to reporters late each Friday afternoon covers not only the weekend but the following Monday. The agenda distributed on March 23rd showed that at noon on the twenty-sixth he would be speaking at a ceremony that each year marks the anniversary of the city's worst building fire, in which a hundred and forty-six workers, most of them young Jewish and Italian women immigrants, lost their lives: the fire in the Triangle Shirtwaist factory, just east of Washington Square, which took place on March 25, 1911. In recent decades, New York's mayors have not always stopped by for the event, but Dinkins planned to attend. The annual ceremony, held in front of the ten-story building in which the fire occurred (it is now used by New York University for classrooms and faculty offices), is presided over by the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, whose numbers and influence increased sharply—as did legislation mandating fire-safety measures (the Triangle factory had no sprinklers, and the doors were kept locked to insure that the workers didn't sneak off with the merchandise)—in the widespread horror over the 1911 death toll.

Because of the fire in the Happy Land Social Club early on the morning of the previous day, the turnout at the ceremony was far larger than it had been in recent years. Among the city officials who accompanied the Mayor was the new fire commissioner, Carlos Rivera, whom Dinkins swore in in February, and who is the first Hispanic to hold that office. Before the speeches began, several dozen I.L.G.W.U. workers, most of them black, Hispanic, or Asian, sang "Look for the Union Label" and "Amazing Grace." Rabbi Allen Kaplan, the associate director of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, who spoke first, reminded the gathering that in 1911 a hundred and forty-six people had died in

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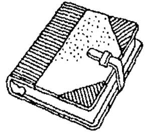

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a fire "fed by the greed and avarice of men." Before Dinkins spoke, the I.L.G.W.U.'s president, Jay Mazur, said that the union was proud to have been of help—that is, with money and manpower—in bringing about the election of the city's new mayor. Dinkins, nattily dressed, as usual—in a dark overcoat with a white scarf—pointed out that "with vicious irony" eighty-seven people had died in the Happy Land Social Club on what was, to the day, the seventy-ninth anniversary of the Triangle fire. "The martyrs of March 25, 1911, and the martyrs of March 25, 1990, are joined forever," he told the crowd. He expressed the hope that the latest terrible fire, like the one seventy-nine years earlier, would "rouse the conscience of the nation" to the need for fire safety. "Battles once thought won sometimes must be won again," he said. His final words, the old union slogan "Solidarity Forever," brought cheers from many in the crowd.

Shortly after 3:30 A.M. on March 25th, Julio Gonzalez, who had earlier had a fight with Lydia Feliciano, his companion for the previous eight years, went to Happy Land, where she worked, just inside the front door, as a coat checker. Gonzalez, aged thirty-six, is a Cuban who came to this country in the 1980 boat lift. His fight with Lydia Feliciano resumed and became more rancorous, and the bouncer threw him out. Gonzalez, who, at least in this country, had apparently never been in trouble with the law, went to a nearby gas station and brought back a dollar's worth of gasoline in a container. In a room on the second story, where most of the customers were, the disk jockey had just put on the reggae tune "Young Lover," by Coco Tea. According to a videotaped statement that Gonzalez made to the police, he splashed the gasoline in the Happy Land's narrow doorway, which was the club's only exit, and threw a match on it. At his arraignment, on April 11th, Gonzalez pleaded not guilty to a hundred and seventy-four counts of arson, attempted murder, and murder. The papers described it as the largest mass murder in United States history. Of the ninety-three people in the club, only five escaped; one of them was Lydia Feliciano, the target of Gonzalez's fury.

The fire at Happy Land would have weighed heavily on the Mayor in any

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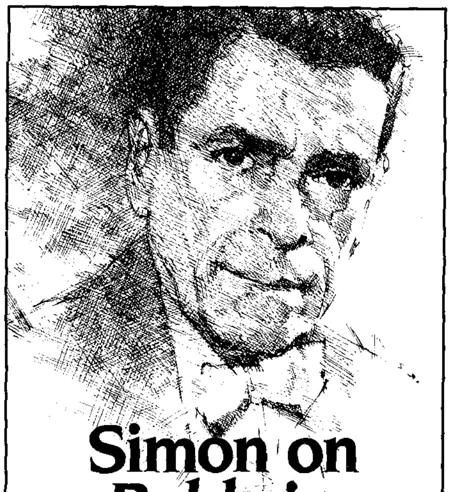

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case, but it became unforgettable—as he told reporters at City Hall late that afternoon—after he visited what he called the "horrendous" scene early that morning. On the first floor of the twenty-foot-wide building most of the bodies were, as he said, "badly charred." He went up the staircase—one person wide—to the second floor, which had no windows and a ceiling less than seven feet high. The raging fire had sucked the oxygen out of the air so rapidly that most of those who died suffocated where they were sitting or standing—or dancing. Many of them died with drinks still in their hands. Dinkins told the reporters that after seeing the bodies—he described them as "wax figures"—he had started to leave and then had gone back to the scene, "so that it would be etched in my memory," as a reminder that it must never happen again. Besides the large number of deaths and their terrible suddenness, the scene was also memorable because of the vicious irony of the club's name. Between the words "HAPPY" and "LAND" on a sign that stretched across the front of the building was a giant painted "smile" button, whose message is the same in all languages. On the day after the fire, city workers took it down, saying that it was unsafe, but many of those on hand believed that those on the scene just couldn't bear to look at it. In the past, desolate areas of the South Bronx have been regular stops for foreign tourists—especially tourists from the Soviet Union and parts of Asia, who don't mind being reminded of how bad things may be in this country. The sign would have been a picturesque artifact for possible tours of the Happy Land ruins, but no one expects it to be hoisted back into place.

NEWS stories involving the name Happy Land were still making headlines nearly three weeks after the tragedy, and that was a surprise. After all, it would hardly be expected that, once the bodies were buried, the short and simple annals of the uncelebrated victims of a fire in the Bronx on March 25th would compete with the latest news of the glittering lives of the headliners whom New Yorkers are used to having the tabloids ply them with. Leona Helmsley, for example, was in state court here this month, petitioning for the dismissal of charges that she had devised schemes to avoid paying millions of dollars in state income taxes. ("My only crime is that I'm Leona Helmsley.") Imelda Marcos is currently a defendant in federal court here, on a racketeering indictment accusing her of stealing several hundred million dollars from the Philippine government. And there was, as always, Donald Trump. However, in trying to sort out responsibility for what happened at Happy Land, local law-enforcement figures almost immediately turned up information that kept Happy Land in the news. The blame for the fire did not lie drearily with some faceless corporation. The corporations involved with Happy Land had the faces of rich and photogenic yuppies-about-town. Alexander DiLorenzo III, who bought Happy Land, along with a block of adjoining stores, in 1985, was especially loaded: some estimates put the DiLorenzo family's real-estate fortune as high as a billion dollars.

Plots in which the rich get even richer by imperilling the lives of the poor are hardly new; many writers of sociological novels and plays could hardly put fingers to word processor without them. References to "Bonfire of the Vanities," part of which is set in the Bronx, were now heard regularly around town. (By coincidence, the producers of a movie version of "Bonfire" were in the city, conducting casting calls for walk-on roles.) DiLorenzo's Clarendon Place Corporation had leased the block of stores that included Happy Land to Little Peach Realty, which is owned by Jay Weiss and a partner. Weiss's other corporations include Queens Apple, One Peach Associates, and Big Peach. Possibly, in court one day, he will divulge whether his corporate names have anything to do with living in the Big Apple or simply represent a fruit fetish. Weiss did not operate Happy Land. In 1987, he subleased it to Elias Colón, who ran the club—and who died in the fire. Weiss's choice of corporate names may be more antic than DiLorenzo's, but he is not nearly as affluent. However, he owns and lives in a two-million-dollar Greenwich Village town house, which he is said to be about to exchange for a more elegant one, and he is married to Kathleen Turner, the movie star, who, just a few days before the fire, opened on Broadway, to generally smashing notices, as Maggie in Tennessee Williams' "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof." She can also be seen currently in a television commercial for the show, undulating, in a lacy lavender slip. As a result, according to some reports, eighty-dollar lacy slips are selling in the stores at a fast pace. Miss Turner, possibly still in the Maggie mode, was unwise enough to tell a reporter that, although the Bronx fire was "unfortunate," the same thing could have happened at a McDonald's. Weiss issued a statement calling the loss of life "lamentable." Nevertheless, references to greed and avarice would doubtless once again be deemed suitable.

The Weiss involvement gave the papers an excuse to run pictures of Miss Turner, with or without her husband, including some in which she was dressed in something other than a slip. By this time, moreover, it had been discovered that DiLorenzo was being sued by his brother and sister, who charged that he was squandering the family fortune by investing in inappropriate properties, such as Happy Land. Even more likely than a landlord with a movie-actress wife to insure that the name of Happy Land would continue to appear in the news was a public family squabble over a billion-dollar fortune. On April 6th, DiLorenzo was released without bail on forty-two separate arrest warrants charging him with violations at a dozen buildings in the city.

Some New Yorkers whom the South Bronx tragedy jolted to attention, at least temporarily, may have been reminded one more time how inappropriate it is to generalize about members of ethnic groups among their fellow New Yorkers—in this case, about young Hispanics, who, along with young blacks, are often blamed for much of what is wrong with the city. Of the eighty-seven who died, most were in their teens or early twenties, and nearly all were Hondurans, who had moved, full of hope, from the poorest country in Central America to the South Bronx, which, though it is the poorest congressional district in the nation, symbolized for them promise and hope. Some of them had been in high school or in community college and had also held down jobs. Some older ones held down two, even three, jobs, as maintenance men, construction workers, housepainters, home attendants—the kind of labor that has traditionally been the lot of new immigrants. One of them had been a seamstress, like many who died in the Triangle fire. None, it seemed, had been on welfare. Although there may turn out to be exceptions, reporters who moved through the neighborhood putting together the tragically abbreviated biographies found no sign of involvement with drugs. Nor, apparently, did any of the victims have criminal records—except for the crime, of which quite a few were guilty, of being illegal immigrants. Sports, especially soccer, had loomed large in the lives of many: seventeen members of various soccer teams died in the fire. Family relationships had been strong, even when it came to going out for a late night at a social club: six members of one extended family and seven of another died together in the Happy Land fire.

One of the elements of local Hispanic life that the fire encouraged non-Latino New Yorkers to give some thought to was social clubs, about which they have generally known, from headlines, only that every year or two quite a few people die in fires in such places. In August, 1988, in a South Bronx club called El Hoyo (The Hole), the toll was six. After the El Hoyo tragedy, Mayor Koch denounced the owners as "murderers" and set up the Mayor's Social Club Task Force, whose purpose was to move aggressively to close down all similarly delinquent clubs. The task force consisted of a dozen units, each made up of six police officers and inspectors from the Buildings Department and the Fire Department. Their responsibility was to monitor the social clubs, of which there are a thousand or so in the city, making sure that the ones that had received vacate orders remained shut. By late last year, however, the twelve task-force units had dwindled to one—not because of budgetary cuts, according to Norman Steisel, who moved into City Hall on January 1st as Dinkins' first deputy mayor, but because of what he called "slackening." Lists of clubs that had received vacate orders were supposed to be posted in each police precinct. Happy Land had a vacate order glued to its door in November, 1988. In July, 1989, an employee there was arrested for selling liquor without a license, but the arresting cops apparently didn't notice that the arrest occurred in an illegally open club, and it continued with business as usual. The Fire Department maintains that it

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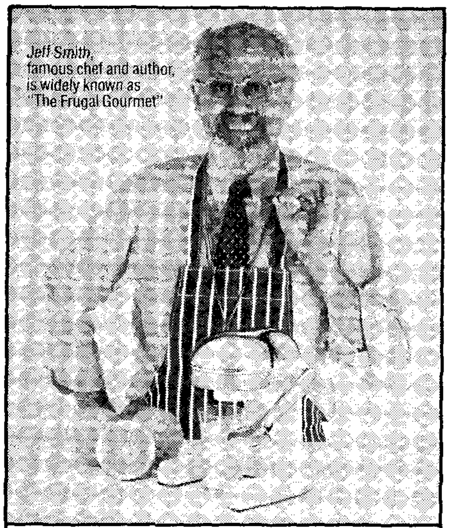
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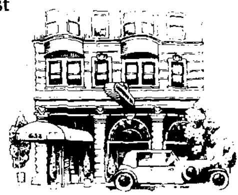
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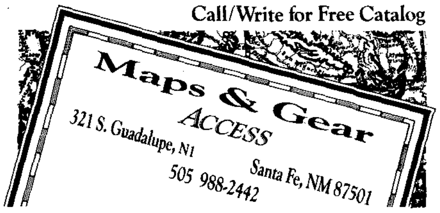

made regular inspections of all officially closed-down premises. There is a firehouse three blocks from Happy Land. One firefighter there said that he and other firemen knew that the club was regularly crowded with people in the early-morning hours. "It was a death trap," he told a reporter, "but it wasn't our district for inspection."

More prudent—and better-fixed—sorts may wonder how people could take such terrible risks just for a night out of conviviality and reggae. One reason that there are so many social clubs here, and that their large numbers are a peculiarly New York phenomenon is that, while poorer residents of other cities can often gather in each other's back yards for fun and companionship, New York is a city with few back yards, especially in such areas as the South Bronx. To many Hondurans, for example, living jammed together in tiny apartments, escaping to a social club was worth taking grave chances. The clubs also serve more socially significant purposes. In black neighborhoods, Protestant churches have traditionally been not only community centers but political centers as well. New York's first black congressional representative, Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., was for twenty-five years the pastor of Harlem's Abyssinian Baptist Church. Bronx City Councilman Wendell Foster, who is black, is a United Church of Christ minister. Hispanics tend to be formally religious, whether they are evangelical Christians or Roman Catholics, as were most of those who died on March 25th. For that matter, the only decoration on the wall of the ten-by-twelve-foot room in which Julio Gonzalez lived was a large portrait of Jesus. Still, it seems that for non-Sunday-morning purposes what the churches offer Hispanics is not always enough. After the Happy Land fire, Xavier Totti, a professor of anthropology at City University's Lehman College, in the Bronx, observed that social clubs sometimes play the same important role in the lives of Hispanics that churches play in the lives of blacks. "There is no priest, no Catholic Church, *that represents* Hispanics as a political leader, or as a voice," he told a *Newsday* reporter. "Social clubs are one of the ways that void is filled."

On weekend nights—and into the early mornings—many of the clubs are

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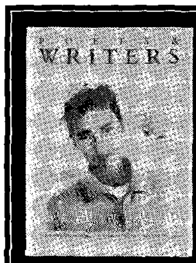

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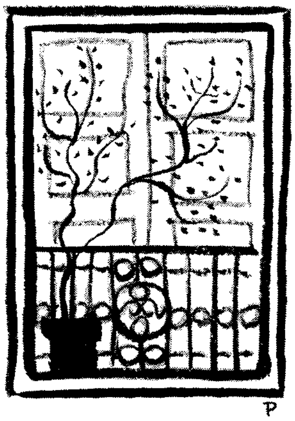
converted into commercial cabarets. Since few of them bother with permit fees, insurance, taxes, and other costs that burden legal establishments, it's a night out that even seamstresses may be able to afford: Happy Land charged five dollars at the door and three dollars or less for a drink. The incorporation papers of many of the clubs, Happy Land among them, identify them as nonprofit community recreation or cultural centers. Neighborhood residents may make use of the clubs for language classes, art shows, Little League meetings, birthday and community parties, and general socializing, and also for political events. Herman Badillo, the first Puerto Rican in Congress, who represented the South Bronx district for eight years, beginning in 1970, has said that the social clubs were an important influence in his political career. Over the years, Latino politicians have regularly stopped by the social clubs to make friends, and not only in the daytime. Victor Robles, who represents the Bushwick section of Brooklyn on the City Council, said after the Happy Land fire that he had often gone to clubs in the past, although, he said, it was evident that they were firetraps. He had never reported their condition to the authorities, because "as a minority, I was caught in a 'Catch-22,' " he explained last month to Mark Mooney, of the *Post*. "It could have been said that I was anti-culture or anti-Hispanic." At a March 29th City Council hearing on the fire, however, Robles was among the most vociferous of the legislators questioning why the city hadn't found a way to shut down Happy Land.



Non-Hispanic politicians have also patronized the clubs in search of political friends. Last year, Dinkins held a rally at El Caney (the name means "the house of the chief"), in East Harlem. In the past, the failure of the city's Latinos and blacks to make common cause at the polls was a major handicap to the political empowerment of New York's minority groups. In the primaries in his two reëlection campaigns, Koch, although he did poorly among blacks, took about two-thirds of the Hispanic vote. On Primary Day last year, however, Latinos made local history when two-thirds of them joined with Dinkins' fellow blacks and voted for him. The fact that they had done the same thing in the 1988 New York Presidential primary, joining their votes with those of blacks to allow Jesse Jackson to carry the city, had encouraged Dinkins to make the run for City Hall. In that primary, Michael Dukakis, with Badillo by his side, met with six hundred people at the Club Cubano Interamericano, in the South Bronx. The Democratic Presidential candidate spoke of how much it made him think of the Greek clubs he and his family used to go to around Boston—a reminder of the long tradition of ethnic groups' seeking out places where they can be with their own. Four months later, the Club Cubano was ordered to close, because it had no secondary exit, no public-assembly permit, and inadequate emergency lighting. "If you're running for office, you have to go to these clubs," a former member of Dukakis's campaign staff explained this month. After the Happy Land fire, the Club Cubano was found to be still open. Late in March, it was padlocked by the police. However, Badillo, who is now at least temporarily out of politics, said recently, "You cannot realistically expect that poor people are going to abandon the only place of entertainment they have in New York City." Early this month, some Hispanic leaders were insisting that the Mayor should find ways for social clubs to continue to operate as community and cultural centers without having to comply with fire-safety laws. One of them said that City Hall was "taking a kind of Wyatt Earp approach," and another accused it of "practically engaging in a witch-hunt."

The city's crackdown on unsafe social clubs also led to embarrassing discoveries. The owner of the largest number of social clubs—fifty-two—was the city itself. Many of them, it was explained, were in run-down buildings that had been taken over by the city after their owners abandoned them. So far, the city has not issued

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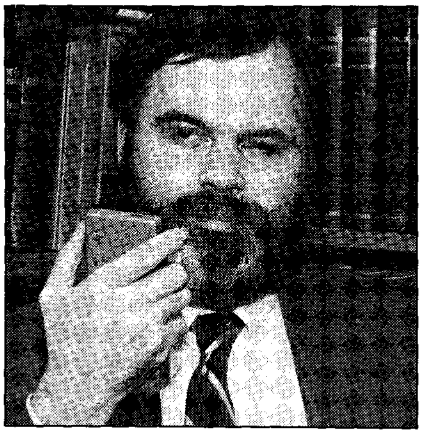

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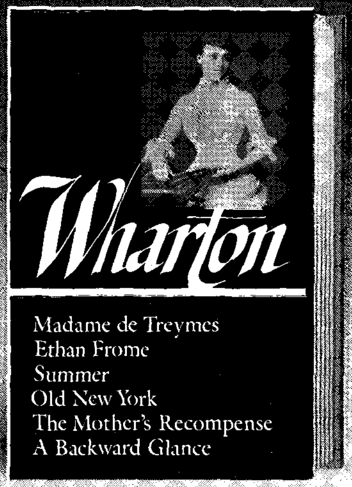

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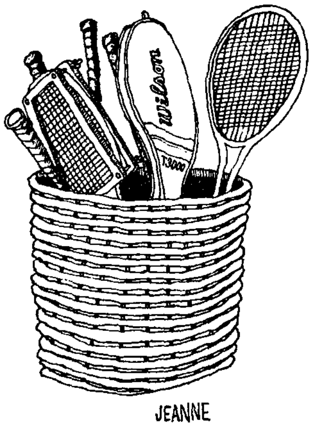
bench warrants to itself. A matter of special embarrassment to Dinkins concerned William Nieves, who had undoubtedly been helpful in winning him the Latino vote, and whose appointment as his director of Latino affairs had just been announced, on March 23rd. Six days later, much of the front page of the *News* was taken up with the headline "COMMISH RAN ILLEGAL CLUB." Nieves, the newspaper reported, was listed in a Buildings Department document as the owner of El Caney, the club where Dinkins had held a rally. In April, 1989, a document naming Nieves as the owner ordered the club to be vacated, because of a lack of fire-safety provisions. Nieves and others involved in the club continued to operate it, the *News* said, and they did not appear in court in response to a bench warrant. Dinkins called a press conference the morning of the twenty-ninth to announce that the *News* story was "wrong in almost every respect." El Caney was not a social club but a "Hispanic cultural center." (He conceded, however, that drinks were often sold there.) Nieves, he said, was not the owner but only a member of the center's board. He was also not a "commish," or even a commissioner, but only a sixty-five-thousand-dollar-a-year Dinkins-administration "director." Nevertheless, the Mayor, when pressed, agreed that the club should have been shut down last year and should remain closed now. That afternoon, Nieves held a press conference of his own, in front of the club, surrounded by members of the community who were holding identical, hastily printed signs that said "EL CANEY DEL BARRIO IS A COMMUNITY CULTURAL CENTER, NOT A SOCIAL CLUB." Several of them complained, in unison, that people who wanted to shut down social clubs such as theirs were guilty of anti-Latino bias. Explaining why the clubs were so important, one of them said, "It's the only place we have to go."



Two days after the South Bronx fire, a *News* editorial, describing Happy Land as "a slaughterhouse disguised as a social club," pointed out that, as anyone could tell from past history, "City Hall's attention span is short." The *News* reminded the Mayor that passionate statements about the disaster were not enough, and that preventing more innocent victims from dying in future fires would require "slogging, monotonous, endless" attention. In fact, only three days after the Social Club Task Force had been sent out into the field, many of the cops assigned to it were complaining that, as one of them put it, this (slogging, monotonous) "social-club stuff" was keeping them from arresting drug dealers and organized-crime perpetrators. "Whose list am I on to deserve this?" one of them said to a *Times* reporter. "This is like Siberia." By early this month, forty of the hundred and eighty-four officers on the task force had been shifted back to narcotics enforcement, without authorization from the Mayor. By then, the force had inspected eight hundred and thirty-six social clubs and found ninety-eight operating illegally. After the ninety-eight were shut down, fifty-two of them reopened, "some within hours," Dinkins had complained. In recent days, such clubs had been chained shut. Meanwhile, not much progress had been made in pushing through a new, stronger city law to regulate the clubs. A remedial measure drawn up by the Mayor's office required that if a club was closed as unsafe it would be required to post a twenty-five-thousand-dollar bond, as well as taking care of the violations. However, a consortium of bonding companies announced that they were not likely to provide such security—social-club owners, they indicated, being hardly the kind of people they were keen on issuing bonds to. The law also required a million dollars' worth of liability insurance, and it seemed probable that many proprietors of small social clubs would argue that they couldn't possibly afford it. However, having read the tabloid stories about Happy Land's owners, several lawyers seemed sure that liability in that case was worth a good shot. Early this month, a Miami lawyer named Ellis Rubin arrived in Honduras at the same time as the plane carrying the coffins of many of the Happy Land dead. The President of Honduras, having declared a national day of mourning, was there to meet the plane. Rubin held a press conference, at which he was joined by two retired Honduran Supreme Court Justices. He urged the relatives of the Happy Land dead to allow him to take their cases, saying that his purpose was for them to know "that the lives of their loved ones were worth something." After the press conference, he announced that he had signed up the families of eight of the victims and expected to sign up many more. He was introduced to reporters as a lawyer who had previously represented Richard Nixon, Frank Sinatra, and Jimmy Hoffa. He described plans to bring suit against both DiLorenzo and Weiss, but, he said, because of its failure to close down Happy Land, "the most responsible was the City of New York."

THERE was what many New Yorkers considered good news for the South Bronx last month. For the previous twelve years, the district had been represented in Congress by Robert Garcia, also a Puerto Rican, who spent much of his time at a horse farm he owned, in upstate New York. Last year, he was convicted of corrupting his office by extorting ninety-six thousand dollars from the owners of the Bronx corporation Wedtech, and he is now serving a three-year sentence in federal prison. Last month, a successor to Garcia was elected, a young former state assemblyman named José Serrano. Serrano, a Puerto Rican immigrant, was supported by Dinkins and most other prominent black New York politicians. "Let the message go from here to there, to the children who are still in the projects and to those who are on the street corner, that there is a better tomorrow," Serrano said at his swearing-in ceremony in Washington, three days after the Happy Land fire. Four busloads of his constituents accompanied him from New York for the event, which was also attended by Jesse Jackson. "So much sweat, so much love, so many broken lives, so many prayers went into making this day possible," said Jackson at the reception that followed. Beforehand, Serrano had led some of his supporters to the steps of the Capitol, where he waved his hand at the seat of national government. "This is all yours," he told them. —ANDY LOGAN

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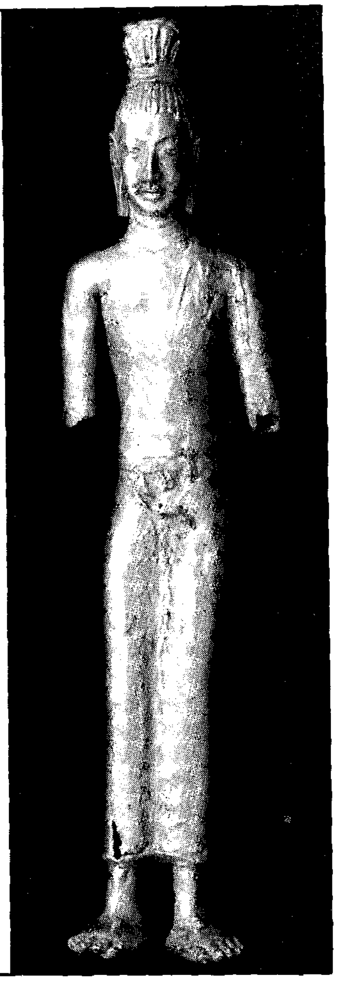

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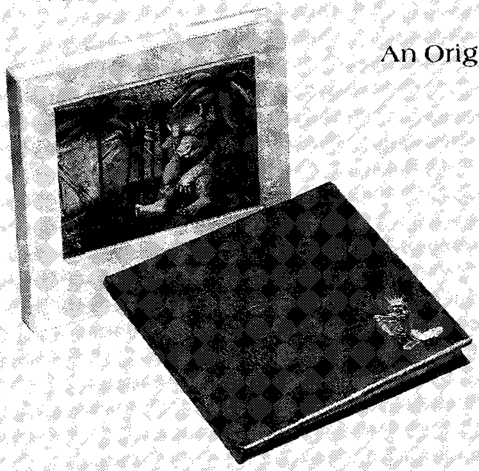

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BOOKS

Women in White

AMONG the few things that really moved Napoleon Bonaparte were the sound of church bells at dusk, and the sight of "a delicate girl dressed in white and wandering among the trees." Presumably, it was some such vision of Josephine—always at her best in sylvan surroundings, and one of the first Revolutionary beauties to show her body through sheer muslin—that made him, first, her idolizing lover and, next, history's most famous cuckold. Only a very young and hopelessly romantic general could have marched off, two days after marrying that libidinous lady, in the belief that she would not soon shed her shift for someone else. As all the world knows, Josephine extended this favor to Hippolyte Charles. When Napoleon returned to Paris, hot from the sands of the Nile, and found her neither chaste nor even at home, his *fureur* knew no bounds.

Actually, she had gone forward to meet him—but by the wrong route. Josephine was attracted to men in proportion to their fame, and the returning hero of Aboukir was of more potent interest than the skinny youth she had wed three and a half years before. When she discovered her error, she hastened home, only to find the bedroom barred to her. For the rest of that terrible night, she lay begging for forgiveness "at the door of a small black staircase . . . suffering the acutest pangs of mental torture," until Napoleon relented.

So writes their mutual friend Laure Junot, née Permon, in "At the Court of Napoleon: Memoirs of the Duchesse d'Abrantès" (Doubleday; $22.50). More than anyone else in post-Directoire Paris, Laure understood what was going on socially, sexually, and politically around the Tuileries Palace. Although just fifteen at the time of Napoleon's elevation to supreme power, in 1799, she already knew all about him from her mother, a wealthy Corsican widow and close friend of the Bonaparte family. Within a year, Laure married the First Consul's right-hand man, General Andoche Junot, commandant of Paris. As *madame la commandante* she ascended at once to the heights of French society, and remained there long after the Corsican Eagle had flown to his last rock at St. Helena. Preternaturally observant, unsentimental, and malicious in her humor, Laure Junot stood out among the generally vapid beauties who fawned upon Napoleon. "Well, you little pest!" he exploded one day, irritated by her knowing smile. "What do you find to laugh at?" She had caught him in a moment of vanity, admiring the shape of his silk-stockinged legs in the midst of a speech decrying dandyism. This was years before Bonaparte embraced pomp as a matter of public policy; the fact that she noticed so early, and that he noticed her noticing, explains why Laure never quite won his approval.

Peter Gunn, in his 1979 biography "Napoleon's 'Little Pest,'" shows us that she was an independent spirit even as a child. Although she developed into a pretty and fashionable Parisienne, there was always something mannishly assertive about her: "I am one of those persons who like to have their own way." She is at pains to present herself in her memoirs as a perfect wife, tolerant of Junot's infidelities, although she did not hesitate to betray him in turn, when it suited her social or sexual purpose.

As one of the capital's most prominent young hostesses, Mme. Junot entertained not only the *nouveaux riches* brought in by Napoleon but also *ancien régime* aristocrats. Instinct warned her that the latter might yet succeed in restoring a Bourbon to the throne. The First Consul was sarcastic about her "fine acquaintances of the Faubourg Saint-Germain" until he found it expedient to cultivate them, too.

Laure's salon on the Champs-Élysées was known for its intellectual as well as its social brilliance. Writers, artists, composers, and scientists flocked to engage their sharp-tongued hostess in conversation while drinking deeply of her husband's legendary cellar. The Junots could afford to be hospitable: Napoleon lavished hundreds of thousands of francs a year on them, and encouraged them to spend it all. In those elegant days before the vulgarities of the First Empire, Laure was a beguiling creature, small, perfectly shaped, with black hair, a lustrous smile, and skin the texture of satin. "It is impossible," one of her admirers wrote, "to imagine anything prettier, more alive, more amiable, more striking

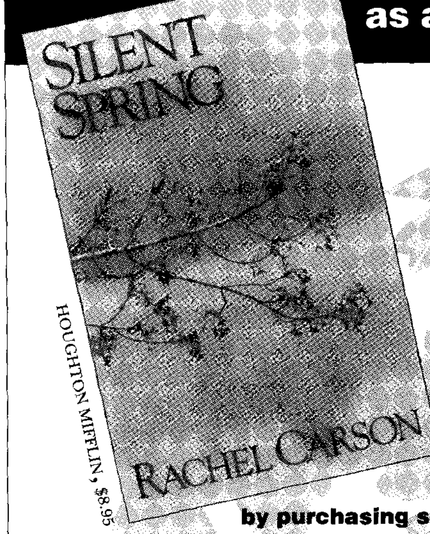
than . . . this young lady." Later, Laure began to put on weight, and it was whispered that her nose, like Cleopatra's, might have been shorter; but her ever-increasing fund of gossip and anecdote held all comers enchanted.

She was obliged to close her salon temporarily in 1805, when Napoleon sent General Junot on a diplomatic mission to Iberia. The trip permitted Laure to record some Goyesque impressions of the Spanish and Portuguese royal families. Despite, or perhaps because of, her husband's clumsy representations, the peninsular situation worsened, and Junot was recalled to muster a new army for war. Laure reëstablished herself on the Champs-Élysées, entertaining as lavishly as ever. In 1807, Junot captured a strategic Portuguese town, and she was rewarded with the title of Duchesse d'Abrantès.

As the Empire approached its apogee, with Napoleon's divorce and his remarriage, to Marie-Louise in 1810, Laure had strategic affairs with Count Metternich, the Austrian Ambassador to France, and a young monarchist, Marquis Maurice de Balincourt. These liaisons stood her in good stead in 1814, when Napoleon fell from power. However, Laure's fortunes began to decline with the loss of her old benefactor. Almost in spite, she turned on Bonaparte, calling him a "Tiger" who deserved to be kept "in a cage."

Widowhood further impoverished her. The Duc d'Abrantès, suffering probably from tertiary syphilis, killed himself not long after appearing in public naked except for plumed hat, orders, and dancing pumps. Debts forced Laure to move out of her splendid town house. Her rich friends dwindled, and by the time of Napoleon's death, in 1821, she remained the darling only of intellectuals.

The ranks of these acolytes were swelled, in 1825, by a tiny genius fifteen years Laure's junior. Honoré de Balzac fell in love with her, and listened spellbound to her stories of the Directoire and the Consulat. He begged for more; amused, she showed him some of the diary jottings and conversational notes she had been in the habit of keeping all her life. Balzac's eyes bulged. Here was a lode of "living silver" (*argent vivant*), which, recast and set into type, would save her from poverty. "The more I have considered your destiny and the nature of



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your intelligence," he told her, "the more I have been struck with this idea . . . you could make [literature] of a brilliant epoch." He offered editorial assistance.

As an experiment, she wrote, for him alone, a "Journal Intime," describing how she, Junot, Metternich, and Caroline Bonaparte used to take turns sleeping with one another. Balzac was ecstatic. (The "Journal" remained secret until 1901, when Joseph Turquan published extracts from it.) Instead, Laure set to work on an ambitious account of her life and times. It was contracted for at a per-volume rate, unfortunately no longer countenanced by publishers, that encouraged maximum prolixity. By the time she wrote *finis*, in 1834, the "Mémoires de Madame la Duchesse d'Abrantès, ou Souvenirs Historiques sur Napoléon, la Révolution, le Directoire, le Consulat, l'Empire et la Restauration" numbered no fewer than eighteen volumes. Their success was tremendous, and made Laure one of the most famous literary figures in Europe. Balzac was more puzzled than hurt when she publicly pretended that she had had no help on the project. She brushed aside his reproof with astounding coldness. "What would you wish me to do? I have to act in this way." For once in his life, he could find no words.

Prosperous again, if not rich, Laure followed up with twelve more autobiographical books, plus novels, plays, and articles. But she could never earn as much money as she compulsively spent, and her final illness was haunted by the sound of her possessions being sold in the next room. She died on June 7, 1838, in her fifty-fourth year. Mme. Récamier, the most exquisite of all the sheer-clad figures to wander through the "Memoirs," came to pray for her soul.

ONE dark day last February, I visited the exhibition of Napoleonic fashions at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and found a hall of white dresses, each seemingly more beautiful than the last. Their vaporous transparency—white bees floating in breezes of lawn, silver droplets falling to coagulate like foam on the floor—seemed to breathe the liberation of the female body after the Eighteenth Brumaire. I had a palpable sense of warm breasts and freely moving thighs, as if the original wearers had slipped them off, moments before, to bathe in the pools of Fontainebleau. As I strolled past these dresses, my head full of the "Memoirs," I could not help imagining Laure in this one, Josephine in *that*, and Mme. Récamier in any number of others. Their outlines began to blur, as if they and not I were perambulating, spinning on the romantic *ronde* started by Napoleon in 1795, when he made a callow proposal of marriage to Laure's mother.

Mme. Permon's mocking laughter resounded through the hall: "*Mon cher Napoléon . . . parlons sérieusement. Vous croyez connaître mon âge?*" Désirée Clary whirled in and out of Bonaparte's reach, trailing white ribbons and lace; he bowed to Director Barras (a red cashmere toga), who waved him on to his mistress, Josephine de Beauharnais (reclining languorously on a gilt chaise longue). Napoleon knelt to bury his head in her lap, while she blew kisses at Hippolyte Charles, across the room in cavalry uniform. Leaping to his feet, Napoleon launched into a vengeful series of entanglements, beginning with the wife of one of his own lieutenants, and ending in the plump arms of Marie-Louise—who, barely out of her bridal gown, delightedly asked him to "do it again." Elsewhere on the carrousel, Laure curtsied to a mysterious M. de V—— (resplendent in strawberry redingote), then yielded herself to General Junot, bristling with brass from head to foot. He was seduced away in turn, by Caroline Bonaparte; Laure abandoned herself to Metternich; Caroline seduced him, too; Laure pirouetted into the satin arms of de Balincourt; Pauline Bonaparte, not to be outdone by Caroline, offered her perfect body to half the youth of Paris; and Josephine's daughter Hortense indulged the sexual gymnastics of a pioneer *bohème*.

The rotation of all these figures, who change names and titles in the "Memoirs" almost as often as they exchange partners (Caroline, for one, becomes Mme. Murat, then Grande Duchesse de Berg, then Queen of Naples), is cumulatively dizzying. The irony is that the central figure in the choreography—Napoleon himself—was by nature uxorious, even filial. That early proposal to Mme. Permon, who had cradled him as a child, betrayed a deep desire for domestic security. Indeed, he sought a triple alliance by offering Pauline to Laure's brother

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Albert, and his brother Jérôme to Laure. No wonder Mme. Permon laughed. Yet Napoleon was deadly serious in his desire to found a dynasty. "I am in a condition to obtain much for those belonging to me."

Josephine's sexual treason, as he sat at his camp desk in Italy, dreaming of stripping "the last film of chiffon" from her body, destroyed forever his ideal of marriage (although she never again deceived him), and soured him to women in general. "The hen should be silent in the presence of the cock," he crudely told Laure, when she expressed a reluctance to follow her philandering husband abroad in 1806. "If Junot amuses himself in Parma, what is that to you?" She saw him look sideways, testing the effect of his words on Josephine. The Empress said nothing, but tears welled in her eyes.

Laure seems almost to share Napoleon's misogyny. She describes with obvious enjoyment how he forced Josephine, hysterical and racked with migraine, to drive through a swollen river, and her pen portraits of other women, with the exception of Mmes. Permon and Récamier, verge on the sadistic. Napoleon tried to bully her, but without success; fascinated, he lapsed into a sort of jocular teasing, which she parried without effort.

PERHAPS the most memorable episode in Laure's memoirs is her account of the First Consul's attempt to seduce her at Malmaison in the summer of 1801. At least, that is how she interprets his sudden appearance in her room at five in the morning, with the light hardly green in the trees. "It is really I," he says, laughing. "Why so astonished?" Laure lies alone in bed. Her husband, as commandant of Paris, is required to spend his nights in the city, and Josephine is away at Plombières. Napoleon draws up a chair, crosses his shapely legs, and brandishes a thick packet of letters. "We are going to chat." His manner is so relaxed she finds herself responding to him without embarrassment.

> "Ah! here is a trap," said he, taking off one, two, three, four envelopes, each highly scented with essence of roses, and inscribed in a pretty handwriting, with the talismanic words, *for the First Consul only.* He came at length to the last envelope, and a laugh soon burst from him. . . .
>
> "It is a declaration," said he, "not of war, but of love. It is a beautiful lady, who has loved me, she says, from the day she beheld me present the Treaty of Campo-Formio to the Directory. And if I wish to see her, I have only to give orders to the sentinel at the iron gate, on the side of Bougival, to let a woman pass dressed in white, and giving the word *Napoleon!* and that [looking at the date], this very evening."
>
> "*Mon Dieu!*" cried I; "you will not be so imprudent?" He looked attentively at me; then said, "What is it to you if I do? What harm can it do me?"
>
> "What is it to me? What harm can it do you? Really, General, those are strange questions. May not this woman be bribed by your enemies?"

Napoleon says, with a grin, that he does not take the letter seriously. "Do you think me so simple, so stupid, as to nibble at such a bait?" He scrawls something on the envelope, then stays, talking companionably, until a clock strikes the hour.

> "The deuce, there is six o'clock!" he exclaimed . . . and approaching the bed he collected his papers, pinched my foot through the bedclothes, and smiling with the graciousness which sometimes brightened his countenance he went away sing-

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> ing, with that squalling voice, so strongly contrasted with the fine sonorous accent of his speech—
>
> *Non, non, z'il est impossible*
> *D'avoir un plus aimable enfant . . .*

We already know that to have one's foot pinched, or one's nose or ear pulled, is a sure sign of Consular favor. (Children have to be bribed not to cry when this happens, with a promise of toy-shop treats afterward.) Napoleon is obviously pleased with his little visit, and Laure puts it down to eccentricity until she realizes it is only the first move of an erotic game. That evening, he draws her aside and whispers, "I am going to the Bougival Gate."

> "I do not believe a word of it," said I in the same tone. "You know too well the irreparable loss to France should any evil befall you. If you say another such word I will tell Madame Hortense, or Junot."
>
> "You are a little simpleton," said he, pinching my ear; then threatening me with his finger: "If you think of telling one word of what I have said to you, I shall not only be displeased but pained."

Evidently, Napoleon has his tryst with the woman in white, because he is in exultant humor when he appears again at Laure's bedside next morning. "Why do you sleep with your window open? It is fatal for women, who, like you, have teeth of pearl." Out comes another packet of documents, and he falls to work, muttering to himself, as Laure stares amazed at him over the bedclothes. He discusses a few matters of state with her, then, pinching her foot as before, makes his musical exit.

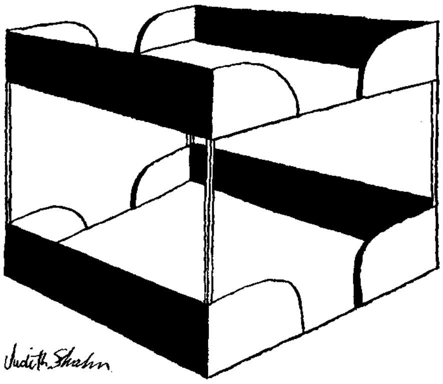
During the day, he ominously praises Laure for having "no fear." Fearful nonetheless, she takes care to double-lock her door that night, and falls asleep with difficulty. When she awakes, the sun is already high, and Napoleon is standing over her, looking like "falcon and eagle together." He reminds her that as master of Malmaison he has a master key to her bedroom. It is too late now for any "chat," but tomorrow he will come, very early indeed, to take her hunting. Something tells Laure that she will be the first item on his list of game.

By now (such is the clarity and vividness of her prose), we are turning the pages as if reading a novel. Tiny telling details—the window open to the warm morning breeze, Napoleon's crossed legs, the rosy perfume of the letters in his hand, his Corsican sibilants—accumulate to such effect that one wonders if Balzac's help was more than merely editorial. The action rises to a comic climax when Laure entices her husband to sleep over on the fateful night, and Napoleon, entering rampant at dawn, is flabbergasted to find them in bed together. But his self-control is splendid as Junot (wearing a Turkish turban) politely asks what he wants.

> "I came to awake Madame Junot for the chase," replied the First Consul in the same tone; "but," after a prolonged glance at me, which is still present to my memory, notwithstanding the thirty years that have intervened,—"but I find her provided with an alarum still earlier than myself."

I will not spoil a potential reader's pleasure with details of Napoleon's later tête-à-tête with Laure, except to say that their dialogue, in a little carriage, is alone worth the price of the book.

As may be gathered from the quotations above, the style of this translation hardly belongs to the twentieth century. It is not unpleasing, suggestive at times of a dowager blushing naughtily into her décolletage, but it lacks the clear fluency of Napoleonic French. Some very fine print on the copyright page says that it derives from an English text published by the Napoleon Society in 1895. There is a terse foreword by Katell le Bourhis, the associate curator for special projects at the Metropolitan Museum's Costume Institute, and a witty introduction by the historian Olivier Bernier, but nowhere are we informed who is responsible for the often clumsy editing. Comparison with a copy of the second French edition (Paris, 1835) in the New York Public Library shows that the Napoleon Society "translation" was drastically abridged. What Doubleday has done is abridge this abridgment. Neither English version indicates where deletions have been made, nor how extensive they are. Sometimes a sentence has disappeared at the drop of a semicolon; sometimes whole chapters. By my calculation, the 1895 set represents a sixty-per-cent loss of text, and this new volume sacrifices about thirty per cent more.



On the whole, Napoleon Society editors acted responsibly. They cut out Laure's obvious space-fillers, and a quantity of biographical material interesting only to her contemporaries. But they also showed their own age's prejudices, deleting passages of dubious morality. For example, the French text of the episode quoted above poignantly details Laure's flooding emotions the night she double-locked her door. It implies that her husband had left her alone at Malmaison as a favor (*une déférence*) to the First Consul. (The gesture gains significance when we read elsewhere that his love for Napoleon verged on the homosexual.) Again, there is a hint that if Laure had known at seventeen what she learned to her cost later, she might have been less solicitous of Junot's feelings:

> I knew that I was necessary to him; but I was too young to realize that his need would not last. Youth is more than innocent about such things; it is inventive [*elle est elle-même créatrice*], and uses its own hands to tauten the blindfold over its eyes. . . .
>
> I thought I saw something evil [in Napoleon's intent], something whose consequences might be terrible; but I saw as a child, and though I sought to stop it, I hoped to bring it on.

Of this psychological tumult—Balzacian, again—hardly a trace survived in 1895. A modern translator would be less censorious of an aging woman's regret that she had not given herself, just once, to the dominant force of her time.

Doubleday has made a fair selection of Laure's best stories, with emphasis on the early years, when she and Napoleon were closest. Occasionally, the heavy cutting shows. A phrase like "Instantly Chevalier's machine occurred to me," in the midst of an account of an assassination attempt, is meaningless if the machine has been decommissioned from an earlier chapter. And one wishes that some post-Imperial anecdotes had been included—in particular, the description of a corpulent, weeping Josephine asking Laure if Napoleon, four years after their divorce, might let her accompany him to Elba. Lastly, it seems a pity not to have ended, as Laure does, with Napoleon marching home in 1815 across mountain roads strewn with violets and hyacinths—only to find Paris "triste and sullen," unwilling to welcome him back.

One day, let us hope, somebody will publish a new selective translation of these "Memoirs," combined with extracts from the "Journal Intime" and from Laure's amorous letters to de Balincourt (edited by Robert Chantemesse as "The Secret Memoirs of the Duchesse d'Abrantès" and published in 1927). In the meantime, our best compromise is to read this Doubleday volume along with a library copy of Peter Gunn's biography. Then we can, like generations of Napoleon addicts before and after us, see the First Consul racing like a boy round the garden of Malmaison; listening with grave respect to the pratings of children and lionkeepers; pacing in a rage up and down the waterfront of Boulogne while the waves crash at his feet; underscoring state documents with his nails, openly cheating at cards, and yawning at his own coronation; proudly pinching the nose of his infant son ("Come, come sir . . . do Kings cry?"); and, most memorably, listening to church bells at dusk, the loneliest man in the world, thinking perhaps of Josephine as she used to be, in her white Directoire dress, when her body was his alone for two sublime nights, and the Revolution was new, and his love for France so great that it hurt.

—EDMUND MORRIS

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

LEWIS PERCY, by Anita Brookner (Pantheon; $18.95). This is an odd novel, not because of its subject—a young man finding his way—but because it consists almost entirely of exposition. Lewis spends his Paris fellowship in the library, dutifully comes home to Mother (widowed), bafflingly stays on in her London-suburb house when death removes her as an obstacle to his freedom and potential happiness, and marries the first person he comes across who sympathizes—an agoraphobe who has to be accompanied everywhere by *her* mother. Aha, you think: a psychology mystery. But pathology is not acknowledged, much less probed. In fact, such story as there is consists of incremental acknowledgments of the state of Lewis's consciousness, which is mostly occluded. He seems unable to see anything not directly presented to him, looking neither right nor left, and is unworldly and prematurely middle-aged to an eerie degree, while unaware of any abnormality—as, indeed, are the few in this underpopulated novel who know him. He appears to be living in some vacuum where ordinary experience is inaccessible. A nap is, if such a thing can be, dramatized in detail, but conversations, courtships, events—the concrete content of most human encounters—are left out, and only their effects recorded. The exposition and the effects are so brilliant that one only wishes the actual novel had been written.

THE HORSE LATITUDES, by Robert Ferrigno (Morrow; $18.95). Danny DiMedici has "lost his edge." Onetime Mayan scholar, onetime drug dealer, and onetime husband of the beautiful Lauren Kiel, he now spends his days in a small California apartment under the watchful gaze of a velvet Elvis painting, and his nights swimming until he's exhausted, trying to work his past lives out of his system. Then Lauren vanishes, and Danny is forced to reëngage all the selves he's been trying so hard to lose as he races to piece together the gruesome and sometimes very funny circumstances of Lauren's disappearance. The outlandish supporting cast is a perfect foil for Danny's arch-flippancy: an ex-brother-in-law who lives in an oil field; twin bodybuilders named Boyd and Lloyd who shoot each other up with steroids when they "feel small"; their uncle the ethnobotanist, big-game hunter, and pharmaceuticals executive who is devoted to "maximizing the human organism" (the twins are his experiment); and Lauren herself, a cruel and seductive motivation-seminar guru who occasionally fancies herself "Ixtab, goddess of ropes and snares." Though this first novel is full of suspense, violence, and sex, one is eager not to call it a thriller; its biting details make it seem like a historical novel set in contemporary times, and there's a knowing heartache at its core which stays with you.

NOTE: "The Trick of It," a novel by Michael Frayn, has been published by Viking ($17.95). Nearly all the

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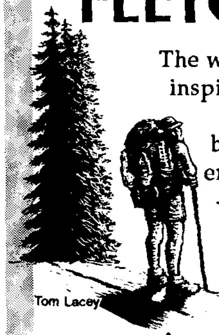

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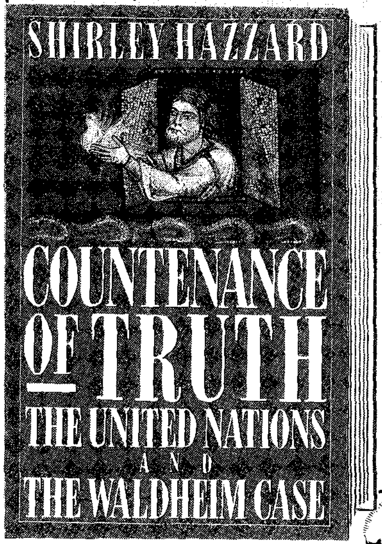

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contents originally appeared in *The New Yorker.*

GENERAL

THE SECOND WORLD WAR, by John Keegan (Viking; $29.95). The outstanding military historian of this generation presents the Second World War as a competition in problem-solving. Leaders, he says, had to make strategic choices, while armies confronted the difficulties both of traditional campaigns (sieges) and of unprecedented ones (airborne landings), and contrived responses to their enemies' tactical and technological innovations. Mr. Keegan's method demands the sacrifice of some cherished myths—the military usefulness of European resistance movements, for one—but it enables nonspecialist readers to understand the rational aspects, the cost-benefit calculations, of the irrational business of war. And the author's unfailing precision—he tells us, for example, that for their assault on Berlin the Russians massed two hundred and ninety-five guns per kilometre—helps us imagine the scale of violence in the most destructive war so far.

REBELS ON EIGHTH STREET: JULIANA FORCE AND THE WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, by Avis Berman (Atheneum; $29.95). Juliana Force was a penniless young woman from Hoboken when she got a job in the early nineteen-hundreds as secretary-assistant to Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, but it was not long before she was taking an important part in Mrs. Whitney's art enterprises: the founding of the Whitney Studio Club, as a meeting place, exhibition space, and workshop for unknown American painters and sculptors; and the helping out and championing of American artists at a time when few museums, galleries, or members of the public had much use for American art. The way to encourage art is to buy it, Mrs. Force used to say, and that is what, with Mrs. Whitney's money, she did for nearly forty years. The author gives us a sparkling portrait of Juliana Force—an attractive, chic, unbeautiful woman who liked to stir things up, and did. The book is also an informal but capacious history of art in America, and particularly in New York, in the first half of the century. Its chief flaw is due to Ms. Berman's hospitality toward just about everything that turned up in her research. Many photographs.

ROCK AROUND THE BLOC, by Timothy W. Ryback (Oxford; $21.95). This discursive history of rock music in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union suggests that the Polish Communist Party official who, in the late sixties, assured his colleagues that "the trumpets of the Beatles are not the trumpets of Jericho which will cause the walls of socialism to come tumbling down" was wrong in his assessment of "Lennonism." Mr. Ryback shows that the cultural apparatchiks of the Eastern bloc were incapable of responding effectively to the challenge of rock's overwhelming popularity, that violent repression did nothing to dampen enthusiasm for "big-beat music," and that most kids had no interest in the lame official substitutes—groups with names like the Songsters and the Happy Guys. This chronicle is full of wonderful facts. In the Soviet Union in the late fifties, underground rock records were imprinted by the millions on discarded X-ray plates. (They were called "recordings on bones.") A Hungarian rock singer named László Komár was known as the Magyar Elvis. And horrified Communist officials were oddly adept at defining the ingredients of rock and roll: "an impressive amount of primitiveness," "exaggerated beat rhythms," and "intoxication with glory."

NOTE: "The Years of Lyndon Johnson: Means of Ascent," by Robert A. Caro, has been published by Knopf ($24.95). Nearly all the contents first appeared in *The New Yorker*. . . . "The Journalist and the Murderer," by Janet Malcolm, has been published by Knopf ($18.95). Most of the contents originally appeared here. . . . "Soviet Women: Walking the Tightrope," by Francine du Plessix Gray, has been published by Doubleday ($19.95). Some of the contents originally appeared in these pages.

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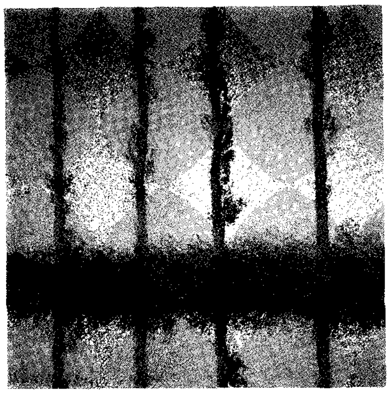

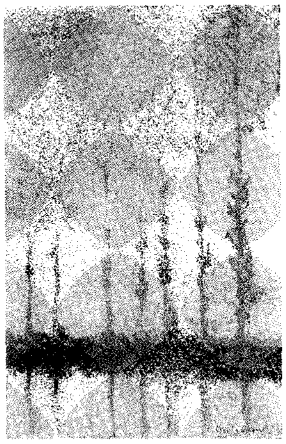

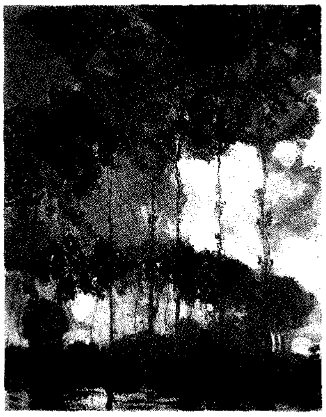

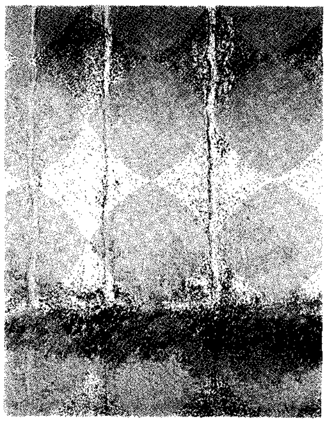

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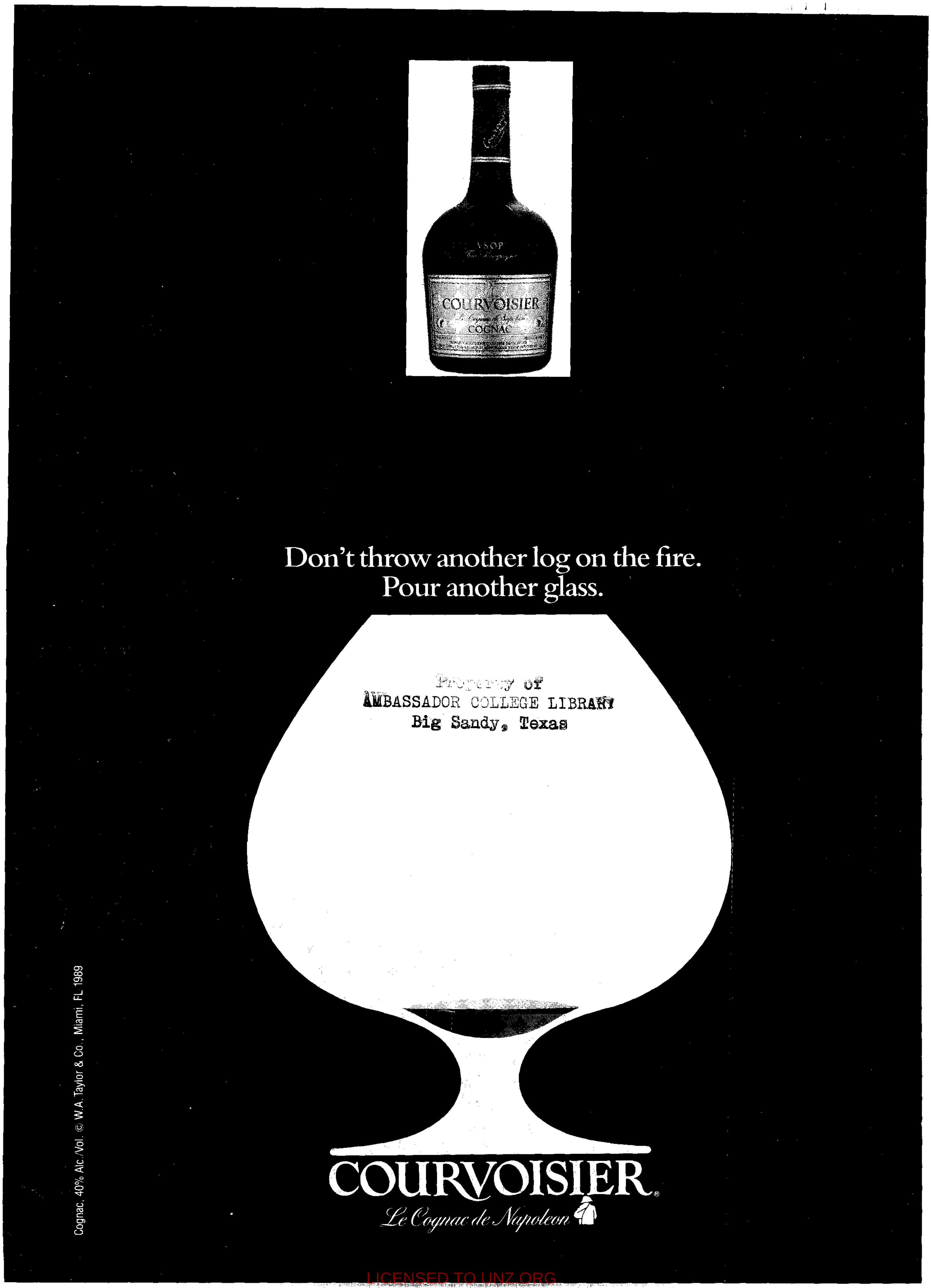
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